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CHICAGO: AMERICA'S CROSSROADS

ALFRED KAZIN

Voices from the Midwest

THEODORE DREISER

Sister Carrie

LUTON SINCLAIR

The Jungle

CARL SANDBURG

'CHICAGO'

DANIEL YANKELOVICH and JOHN IMMERWAHR

U.S. Industry and the Work Ethic

GORE VIDAL

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Henry James and the Dream of Fiction

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DANIEL YANKELOVICH AND
JOHN IMMERWAHR

3

U.S. Industry and the Work Ethic

special section

CHICAGO: AMERICA'S CROSSROADS

ALFRED KAZIN

15

Voices from the Midwest

THEODORE DREISER

24

Sister Carrie

UPTON SINCLAIR

27

The Jungle

CARL SANDBURG

30

'Chicago'

RICHARD WRIGHT

32

American Hunger

JAMES T. FARRELL

35

Judgment Day

HARRY MARK PETRAKIS

38

'A Chicago Greek Boyhood'

GWENDOLYN BROOKS

42

'Beverly Hills, Chicago'

SAUL BELLOW

44

Herzog

* * *

GORE VIDAL

46

Lincoln

DARSHAN SINGH MAINI

71

Henry James and the Dream of Fiction

IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

78

Views on Print, Computers and Democratic
Societies

REVIEWS

ROBERT J. MYERS

85

International Law in Practice

DON K. PRICE

87

What Causes Innovation

DOUG RAMSEY

90

The Big Band Transition

JOHN JUNKERMAN

92

Economy of the Spirit

HOWARD GRUBER

94

How We Know What We Know

LEO SAUVAGE

96

Rebirth of a 'Salesman'

MARSHA MIRO

98

Design and Decoration

18

A NOTE TO THE READER

THE distinguished critic H.L. Mencken described Chicago as the literary capital of the United States. At the beginning of this century, a group of writers from scattered midwestern towns came together in bustling, commercial Chicago. Out of the rough immediacy of the city, they forged a style that was distinctively and unsparingly realistic. The "Chicago Renaissance" fueled by these writers soon captured the attention of the entire nation. The special section of this issue of *The American Review* presents pieces by several outstanding Chicago realists—Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair, Carl Sandburg, Richard Wright, James T. Farrell, Harry Mark Petracis, Gwendolyn Brooks and Saul Bellow. Also included is a perceptive essay by Alfred Kazin on the literary tradition of Chicago.

As Chicago brings to mind "industry"—with all its implications, we have included as lead article in this issue a piece that asks us to think about the future of American industry. In it, authors Daniel Yankelovich and John Immerwahr describe the "second industrial revolution" now underway, which is shifting "the American economy away from traditional 'smokestack' manufacturing industries to those based upon information, services and new technologies." Also appearing in this issue is a critical appreciation of Henry James by the distinguished Indian scholar Darshan Singh Mairi, and an essay on the new electronic technology and its potential political impact by sociologist Irving Louis Horwitz.

The book reviews include critical appraisals of *Law, Morality, and the Relations of States* by Terry Nardin; *Political Innovation in America: The Politics of Policy Initiation* by Nelson W. Polsby; *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* by Lewis Hyde; and *In Search of Mind: Essays in Autobiography* by Jerome Bruner.

—J.A.M.

P, 6024

U.S. Industry and the Work Ethic

By DANIEL YANKELOVICH and JOHN IMMERWAHR

The new industries driving the U.S. economy—in services, information and high technology—generally offer employees more discretion on the job than traditional assembly-line manufacturing. Not surprisingly, a recent survey associates this increased freedom with a renewed commitment by many Americans to the traditional work ethic. In the article that follows, social analysts Daniel Yankelovich and John Immerwahr also link a strong work ethic with “a broad cultural shift toward values of personal growth and self-development” common among members of the post-World War II baby-boom generation, and go on to suggest ways management can tap this attitude more fully. Yankelovich is chairman of the public opinion research firm Yankelovich, Skelly & White, Inc., and the president of the Public Agenda Foundation, a New York research organization that studies public policy issues. He has written *New Rules: Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down* (1981). Immerwahr, a senior project consultant for the foundation, is a philosophy professor at Villanova University in Philadelphia.

TODAY, the United States is in the grip of a second industrial revolution. While the first, stretching from the 1870s to the 1970s, shifted the main sector of the American economy from agriculture to industry, the new revolution is shifting the economy away from traditional “smokestack” manufacturing industries to those based upon information, services and new technologies. It took the country decades to accommodate the cultural and social implications of the first industrial revolution, and it would be rashly optimistic to assume that Americans will not face serious stresses in coming to terms with the changes that are transforming the workplace today. A key element in these changes is the increased discretion in the workplace.

America's rise to economic preeminence in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries was partly based on a radically new way of organizing the workplace—a deliberate effort to reduce the amount of job discretion for most workers. The new approach skillfully blended the available human resources with newly developed technologies into what one might call a “low-discretion model” of the workplace, one that maximized productivity by minimizing the need for creativity, autonomy and commitment on the part of individual workers.

The American Review

The successful industrialization of America implicitly taught a powerful lesson—the key to success lay not with upgrading frontline workers but with downgrading and simplifying their jobs. It would be an oversimplification, of course, to say that discretion was reduced in all jobs. Jobs in crafts, transportation, mining and some other areas did not yield to job specialization. But the assembly-line model set the pattern for a large number of jobs.

A mutually rewarding social contract was another important characteristic of the new economy. The genius of the low-discretion approach was a *quid pro quo* that made industrial America as attractive to many workers as it was to managers; large numbers of workers voluntarily left their lives as self-employed farmers to work in urban industrial centers. The heart of this exchange was a system of values that was remarkably congruent with the needs and realities of the workplace.

The new urban industries appealed to the consumer values for which people in almost every culture hunger. People who worked hard at their jobs (regardless of how unpleasant those jobs were) could reap the fruit of their productivity through an increasingly high standard of living—as measured by the cars, clothing, appliances and houses that the industrial machine was producing. For many people, these consumer goods also provided status and even a sense of belonging. What workers may have surrendered in terms of autonomy on the job, they gained in rewards outside the workplace. The genius of the assembly line was that it reduced reliance on individual motivation, skill and goodwill. Workers were not presumed to *want* to do a good job. It sufficed for them to show up for work and to maintain the tempo of the line.

It is commonly said that American industrial growth was based on a strong work ethic. But the historical record suggests that this is a rather romantic and distorted view. Sociologist Daniel T. Rogers observes that the work ethic was strongest among the self-employed, high-discretion craft and agricultural workers in preindustrial America and that, in large part, the industrial factory system represented a systematic weakening of the values inherent in the work ethic. Yet, as Rogers points out, the idea of the work ethic continued to have an important symbolic role: "As rhetorical commonplace, as political investive or as moral shibboleth, the equation of work and virtue continued to pervade the nation's thinking long after the context in which it had taken root had been all but obliterated."

In recent years both the composition of the work force and its assumptions about the nature of work have changed in important ways. There have been two tremendous shifts in the kind of jobs held by most working Americans. One is the move from blue-collar toward white-collar jobs. In 1920, only about 25 percent of all jobholders held white-collar jobs, and almost twice this number held blue-collar jobs. Over the next 60 years, the number of white-collar jobs rose to 43 percent in 1960 and then to over 53 percent in 1981. While this was happening, the number of blue-collar jobs was declining slightly. By 1981, 44 percent of all jobs were blue-collar jobs. Managers and professionals, for example, today outnumber unskilled laborers by about five to one.

This shift has had a considerable impact on the amount of discretion in the workplace. Almost half of all white-collar jobholders say that they have a great

deal of freedom about how to do their jobs in contrast to a third of blue-collar workers who report a corresponding amount of control over their work. Given the increase in the percentage of white-collar workers, it is reasonable to assume that the total amount of discretion has increased, too.

Exactly the same argument can be made about another major shift, the movement from jobs in industry to jobs in the service sector. In 1950, goods-producing jobs made up 41 percent of the total as compared to service jobs, which accounted for 59 percent of all jobs. By 1981, the number of goods-producing jobs had dropped to 28 percent, and service-sector jobs had risen correspondingly to 72 percent. Some service-sector jobs have little discretion, but our findings show that these jobs generally have more discretion than goods-producing jobs.

At the same time that the workplace has changed, there have also been changes in the social values and realities that shape people's working lives. One of the most significant trends has been the increase in educational levels. In 1940, the median level of education for an American worker was 8.7 years. Four decades later this figure had increased to 12.7.

One of the major demands that better educated jobholders bring to the workplace is an insistence on more freedom over how to do their jobs. Nearly two-thirds of college-graduate jobholders (63 percent) said in a recent Public Agenda Foundation survey that they wanted more freedom in how to do their work, as compared to less than half (48 percent) of jobholders with no college training who expressed the same desire. What makes this difference even more dramatic is that better educated jobholders already have much more discretion than less educated workers. Nearly six out of 10 college graduates say that they have a great deal of freedom in how to do their work, compared to about four out of 10 of less educated jobholders.

Social changes have also affected the receptiveness of the new workplace to the traditional "carrot and stick" reward system. The stick was the fear that unemployment meant being totally destitute; the carrot was the prospect of high pay and all that it can buy. But neither of these elements is as potent as in the past.

Though unemployment is still a dreadful experience, its worst economic effects have been softened by the creation of a "safety net." The availability of unemployment compensation, food stamps and other transfer payments means that the possibility of losing a job is not as frightening a prospect as it once was. The trend toward dual-wage-earner families has also strengthened the safety net. If both husband and wife are working, the loss of a job by one is not as devastating as the loss of a job by the sole support of a family.

At the same time, the positive rewards that worked so well in the past have also lost some of their power. Many of the terms in the implied "unwritten contract" have been modified. There has been a change, for example, in the ethic of self-denial that was such an important part of American industrial success. People do not expect to sacrifice as much of themselves for a job, and having a job no longer automatically entitles a man to special respect and treatment in the home if his wife is also working. In 1968, 86 percent of the population equated the role of being a "real man" with being a good provider and sacrificing for

The American Review

one's family. By 1978, the number who held this view had dropped to 67 percent.

There has also been an erosion in the symbolic potency of the material rewards of success. Attitudes toward automobiles are a good example. While Americans still highly value their cars, the emotional meaning of owning a car is changing. Even before the energy crisis forced Americans to buy smaller, more fuel-efficient autos, there were signs that the American love affair with the car as a symbol of success and self-expression was cooling.

The net result of these changes is a redefinition of what it means to have a job. For Americans who lived through the Great Depression, to have a job was still regarded as a privilege. For contemporary Americans, a job is a right rather than a privilege. In 1978, 74 percent of the American public felt that "the government in Washington ought to see to it that everybody who wants to work has a job." As a result of such attitudes, workers bring a new set of expectations to their jobs. One observer summarized the change this way:

Workers seem to have two separate unwritten contracts, each of which plays a distinct role. One contract is economic. The economic contract gets them to the workplace at eight or nine and keeps them there until five. But once they get there another contract takes over, a psychic contract. This rather different set of expectations and obligations seems to govern how hard people really work, and what the quality of their work will be.

We believe that the American workplace has come almost full circle. At the beginning of the 19th century, most workers held high-discretion jobs as farmers and craftsmen. After a century of moving workers into low-discretion jobs, the country now finds itself returning to a situation where control over the pace and quality of work is back in the hands of the individual. The shift toward high-discretion jobs as the norm for working Americans has profound effects that have not been completely understood by government or business leaders. To the extent that managers can no longer stimulate effort through the existing reward system and through traditional methods of supervision, they must rely on the internal motivations of jobholders to guarantee high levels of effort and good quality work. Which brings us to the question: how sound is the work ethic in America today?

Despite the common view that the American work ethic is dead or deteriorating, our research shows that it is in surprisingly good health. This, however, contradicts many popular assumptions: business, government and labor leaders, as well as working people themselves, believe that the American work ethic is in serious trouble. Although a majority (52 percent) express the view that they themselves are working harder now than they did in the past, the Public Agenda Foundation found that 62 percent of the American public believe that most people "do not work as hard today as they did five or 10 years ago."

Western culture has seen a number of different norms regarding work evolve during its history. The dominant concept of work throughout Western history is that of "Adam's curse"—work as disagreeable, unpleasant and even degrading. Leisure, Aristotle said, is the desirable state for human beings. This traditional view of work says that people labor only out of necessity, to produce the food

and shelter needed for survival.

A more positive view of work developed out of the early Christian experience. Codifying the social practice of his day, St. Thomas Aquinas advanced a view of work as morally neutral. It remained for Protestantism to invest work with the positive moral meanings that we associate with the phrase "work ethic"—a view that work is morally worthy for its own sake, regardless of its financial rewards. For Luther and Calvin, leisure was morally unacceptable, and work was a way of serving God. Although in modern times work has lost its explicitly religious connotations, this Protestant vision remains at the heart of the "work ethic."

If one leaves aside the question of people's actual behavior, there is considerable evidence that, as a cultural norm, the work ethic has wide currency in contemporary America. A 1980 Gallup study, conducted for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, shows that an overwhelming 88 percent of all working Americans feel that it is personally important to them to "work hard and to do their best on the job." The study explicitly concludes that a faulty work ethic is not responsible for the decline in U.S. productivity. Quite the contrary: the study identifies "a widespread commitment among U.S. workers to improve productivity" and suggests that "there are large reservoirs of potential upon which management can draw to improve performance and increase productivity."

The Public Agenda Foundation study has provided a more detailed examination of what might be called the "unwritten work contract"—the assumptions that each individual makes about what he or she will give to a job and expects to get in return. Respondents were presented with four alternative work "contracts." One represented the traditional view of work as an unpleasant necessity. A second characterized the conception of work as morally neutral: that a job was essentially an economic transaction in which work is given in exchange for pay. The third represented a newer vision of work: that it is interesting and desirable in its own right, but limited in the claims it should make on a person's energies and commitments. The fourth contract presented a strong version of the work ethic: that work has moral value for its own sake.

The overwhelming majority of the U.S. work force interviewed expressed one of the positive attitudes toward work. The study found that a majority (52 percent) aligned themselves with the strong form of the work ethic: "I have an inner need to do the very best job I can, regardless of pay." Twenty-one percent adopted a more limited commitment to their jobs, acknowledging a positive value in their work but still wanting to make their greatest personal investment to their nonwork lives.

One source of reinforcement for the work ethic is a broad cultural shift toward the values of personal growth and self-development. A large number of studies have documented a significant value shift in all the advanced industrial democracies during the last three decades. After two world wars bridged by a worldwide depression in the '30s, the post-World War II era in all of these countries enjoyed more than a generation of prosperity and peace. To some extent, the people growing up in this period have taken for granted the security and affluence that were so important to their parents, and have come to place great emphasis on what we call the values of expressivism.

It is frequently said that these new values have undercut the traditional values

The American Review

of hard work by leading to a form of narcissism and self-absorption that is inconsistent with productive work. The values of expressivism do bring new demands to the workplace. But our findings show that expressivism can enhance the work ethic when the people who focus on personal growth see their jobs as an outlet for their own self-expression and self-development.

The public Agenda Foundation has explored the fundamental question of what people see as their primary motive for working. Three possibilities were examined. The first sees work primarily as a means of survival. A second level of motivation assumes that the basic survival needs have already been met and places a heavy demand on improving one's standard of material well-being. A third level takes both survival and increasing standards of living as givens and focuses on personal growth and self-development as the primary motive for working.

Our study documents what appears to be an impressive shift in the core relationship to work—from work as a means of survival toward work as a means of enhancing self-development. The shift is clearest if we begin by examining jobholders' perceptions of their parents' relationships to work. Half of the work force say that their parents worked primarily to survive, and only a small fraction (5 percent) see their parents seeking self-development through work. When jobholders describe themselves, however, the number who say that they work for survival drops significantly (to 38 percent), and the number who say that they work primarily to develop themselves as persons more than triples (to 17 percent).

How does such a commitment to self-development accord with the values of the work ethic? Our findings suggest that the connection is remarkably close. People whose primary motive for work is self-development almost universally endorse the work ethic.

There seems to be an important relationship, then, among four distinct factors: the upgrading of jobs, the educational level of the work force, the focus on expressive values and the work ethic. All of these factors are mutually supporting. As jobs become more challenging and more autonomous, and as people become better educated and focus more on personal growth, employees are also likely to see work as having a positive and central place in their lives. They are also much more likely to bring greater demands to their jobs. The degree to which these demands are met will have a great deal to do with whether the work ethic is harnessed and channeled into more productive work.

So far, we have stressed the qualities that people expect to *get* from their jobs. But both Public Agenda Foundation research and other studies show that people are willing to *give* a great deal to their jobs, as well. People want to be involved in their work, and they want to help their employers be more effective.

Yet, there is a problem in America's workplaces. People are not working as hard as their belief in the work ethic indicates that they should be. Public Agenda Foundation research found that most people say they are giving considerably less to their jobs than they believe they could give and, in principle, are willing to give. Fewer than one out of four (23 percent) say that they are performing to their full capacity. The majority say that they could increase their effectiveness significantly.

U.S. Industry and the Work Ethic

Objective studies of the workplace confirm these findings. D.J. Cherrington, a professor of organizational behavior at Brigham Young University, clocked actual work behavior over a two-year period. Cherrington found that only half of the workers' time was related to the job—the other half went for coffee breaks, late starts and early quits, personal activities, waiting and otherwise idle time.

Another direct sign of a decline in work behavior comes from a study conducted in 1965 and 1975 by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. Researchers measured work behavior by asking workers to keep a detailed diary of their activities. These diaries were used to compare the nominal numbers of hours on the job with the amount of time people actually spent working. Not surprisingly, the number of hours worked fell considerably below the nominal work time. But the study also showed that between 1965 and 1975 the gap between the actual time worked and the "official" work hours increased by more than 10 percent. The researchers noted a parallel drop in the rate of productivity increase. Productivity growth rates rose by 3 percent from 1955 to 1965, but then slowed to an annual average growth rate of 1.9 percent between 1965 and 1975. The researchers suggest that if their findings were extrapolated to all American workers, this decline in itself, quite apart from such factors as insufficient investments or aging equipment, could account for almost all of the slowed tempo of productivity growth in the decade from 1965 to 1975. Taken together, these findings suggest that there is a basis of truth in the popular impression that people are not working as hard as they used to and that this decline has contributed to the slowdown in competitive vitality that the United States has experienced.

So far, we have presented two sets of seemingly incompatible facts. On the one hand, working Americans endorse the ideal of giving one's best to the job. At the same time, their actual performance on the job reveals a slackening effort. If Americans have an inner need to give their best to their jobs, what is preventing them from giving more?

The answer, in its simplest terms, is that managerial skill and training have not kept pace with the changes that have affected the workplace. A number of findings suggest that the American workplace is currently structured in ways that undermine the strong work-ethic values that people bring to their jobs. One of the most startling is the degree to which the managers have undercut the link between a jobholder's pay and his or her performance. This situation represents a sharp departure from the traditional American value of individualism. A central theme of the country's cultural heritage supports the idea that individuals will fail or succeed through their own effort and hard work. When people receive equal rewards regardless of effort or achievement, the implicit message from management is, "We don't care about extra effort, so why should you?"

Public Agenda Foundation research shows that most jobholders now say there is little or no connection between how good a job they do and how much they are paid. Almost half of the work force (45 percent) believe that there is no relationship, and another 28 percent say that there is some relationship. But only 22 percent see a close link. In addition, most Americans do not think that they themselves will be the primary beneficiaries if they work harder.

These findings suggest that most Americans want to work hard and do a

The American Review

good job, but people also see that the workplace does not reward people who put in extra effort. Under these conditions, people who live up to their work-ethic norms begin to feel like fools. Thus, the reward system undermines the work ethic.

A second problem is the failure of managers to motivate people to perform effectively. It is easy to dismiss such complaints as routine grumbling about the boss. But Public Agenda Foundation research shows that jobholders' perceptions of their managers are considerably more sophisticated. In fact, most jobholders have a generally positive attitude toward their managers. They like them personally and respect their dedication.

When it comes to the question of whether managers know how to motivate people, jobholders' attitudes shift dramatically. Forty percent say that their own managers do not know how to motivate them to get the best results; 75 percent say that managers in general do not know how to motivate workers.

In sum, we conclude that the American economy is failing to utilize one of its most powerful resources—a widespread commitment to the work ethic. Although many people want to work hard and do good work for its own sake, the workplace is structured in ways that discourage rather than support this norm. As a result, people work below their potential. The demands of jobholders—for managers who know how to motivate, for pay tied to performance and for other changes in the workplace that increase motivation—reflect people's desire to give more to their jobs than they are currently giving. We now turn to some of the steps that might be taken to capitalize on this valuable asset.

In *The Soul of a New Machine* [see *Dialogue* 57] Tracy Kidder describes the drama of producing a new computer. In putting together the design team, the project leaders looked for a "mysterious" factor over and above technical expertise and academic qualifications: "The term the old hands used... was 'signing up.' By signing up for the project you agreed to do whatever was necessary for success. You agreed to forsake, if necessary, family, hobbies, and friends—if you had any of these left (and you might not if you had signed up too many times before.)"

Obviously, few jobs will—or should—demand the kind of commitment that kept these engineers working 18-hour days writing microcode in a windowless basement. But this example highlights, in an extreme way, the difference between a routine and limited commitment to the workplace and a form of commitment that, in one way or another, involves devoting maximum discretionary effort to the job.

The task of mobilizing human resources cannot be addressed by any single group or institution. We start with managers, however, because many observers of the workplace have noted that managers' expectations have a tremendous impact on workplace performance. We have identified three strategic areas in which managers can strengthen the work ethic. These are *quality standards*, *incentives* and *relation to authority*. These concerns are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. In one way or another, they all involve a fundamental challenge to the low-discretion model that has been successful for much of America's industrial history.

Setting and enforcing the highest possible standards of quality are an essen-

tial precondition for mobilizing the work ethic. The central concept of the work ethic is that good work has a moral or intrinsic value. Nothing corrodes the work ethic more than the suspicion that employers and managers are indifferent to quality.

Although this step appears to be uncontroversial, it frequently requires sacrifices on the part of firms that attempt it. Unremitting effort is also required: it is fatally easy to learn to live with mediocre levels of quality. Managers who have been successful in using high standards to produce greater commitment constantly note that workers tend initially to be cynical and suspicious of company efforts to raise quality. Many employees reject the pressure involved until they see that the company, too, is willing to make sacrifices in the name of quality.

Traditionally, enforcing standards of quality has been the prerogative of quality-control inspectors. But an approach more consistent with mobilizing the work ethic would be to place much greater responsibility for quality on workers themselves.

A second line of strategy focuses on the system of incentives and rewards. Our research shows that where recognition for individual merit is nonexistent or relatively insignificant, across-the-board raises have a tendency to erode the work ethic. Most jobholders assert that they would value a closer connection between pay and performance and would work harder if they had it.

But financial rewards are not the only incentives available for reinforcing the work ethic. The most difficult choices in this area are those that involve restructuring work so that it provides greater psychic rewards. Many of the factors that people identify as motivators—among them, interesting and challenging work—are not monetary in nature. A number of companies have had dramatic success by upgrading the character of their jobs.

One of the most familiar experiments with this approach is the General Foods plant at Topeka, Kansas. The new design for the plant was first conceived in 1968, partly in response to growing concerns about absenteeism, turnover and worker alienation. Despite some setbacks, the plant has maintained its basic organizational principles and its high productivity and profitability into the 1980s. Harvard business professor Richard Walton, a member of the original planning group, outlines the approach:

The design was regarded as radical and counterintuitive at the time because we acted contrary to the received logic, initiated with the industrial revolution, by which productivity increases were sought through a progressive fragmentation of tasks, deskilling jobs, separation of planning and implementation, control of the individual worker, reliance on external and formal controls, and pay pegged to the specific job. We proposed a work system in which normally separate jobs were combined to create whole tasks, skill requirements were deliberately increased, teams were made collectively accountable for a segment of the work flow, pride and peer pressure were substituted in part for external and formal controls, and pay was geared to what a worker knew and could do.

A boring and unchallenging job may be acceptable (or even preferable) to

The American Review

someone who regards work as an unpleasant necessity. But if work is perceived as an arena for personal growth and challenge, it should be complex and intrinsically interesting. The Topeka design, and hundreds of others like it, mobilizes the work ethic by increasing the skill level of jobs in order to produce higher productivity.

The most radical and difficult strategy to mobilize the work ethic concerns a collection of problems having to do with matters of authority, status, fairness and prerogatives in the workplace. The low-discretion model of work typically makes a sharp distinction between those who manage and those who do the work. In a system that requires authority and control, status differences between managers and hourly workers are probably inevitable. And in the workplace, there is almost total acceptance of the appropriateness of authority and even acceptance of a wide range of status symbols—large pay differentials, different rules of conduct for managers, separate dining facilities and other prerogatives that reflect the managers' monopoly of power and control. But practices of this sort take a heavy toll on commitment to job and employer.

One way to enhance the work ethic is to be much more mindful of how the exercise of prerogative affects others and more aware of the inherent danger of building bureaucracies with many levels of supervisor and status. Such organizations tend to prevent individuals from gaining control and responsibility for their own work and discourage a sense of shared goals. Many organizations that have been successful at winning high levels of commitment are characterized by relatively flat organizational charts and by status differences that are not invidious: they do not shout the message, "Managers are a class apart."

These three areas, then, are the major domain in which managers, the key players in this drama, can reinforce and harness the energy of the work ethic. But resistance to changes in standards, incentives and authority/status relationships can be massive. Some firms have overcome such resistance; others have failed. Most companies have not begun the process.

America is now reevaluating a consensus that has lasted for decades. The old consensus was built on a hunger for economic well-being so intense that Americans were willing to sacrifice other values to have it, and on an international economy in which the U.S. position was so dominant that the material well-being Americans craved was readily available.

But this consensus has now broken down. The promise of ever increasing consumer goods can no longer be the universally inspiring goal it once was. Americans now need a new basis for consensus, a new national project that will take the place of the consumer-oriented system of values that was the heart of the low-discretion system.

What form this new consensus will take cannot be predicted, but the workplace may well become the prime arena in which it will be hammered out. Many aspects of American society—family, status, international role, authority, consumption—seem to converge at the workplace. A new way of organizing work—or a failure to find new ways of organizing work—can have an influence on American life that will go far beyond the confines of the workplace and the economy.

□

Chicago: America's Crossroads

THERE is something about the roughhewn energy of Chicago that has impressed generations of observers as quintessentially American. As the eminent architect Frank Lloyd Wright put it: "Chicago builds in a solid, heavy, big, fine way, and she has a great spirit." Somehow it seems fitting that the city should claim the world's tallest skyscraper (the 110-story Sears Tower) and busiest airport.

From the city's beginning as a frontier fort settlement in 1803, commerce has been the key to Chicago's development. Located at the conjunction of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River system and surrounded by the productive farmlands of the Midwest, Chicago became the gateway to the rest of the nation for food products, especially after the railroads and stockyards were built in the 1840s and 1850s.

In the second half of the 19th century Chicago was known as a place for those willing to work hard, first in the meat-packing plants and then in the heavy industries like iron and steel that sprang up around the city. Carl Sandburg's "City of the Big Shoulders" soon came to stretch for 40 kilometers along Lake Michigan and spread rapidly inland across the prairie. Immigrants from many European countries, attracted by the promise of steady jobs, settled in ethnic enclaves—Germans, Irish, Italians and Poles chief among them. By 1900 more than 80 percent of the city's residents were immigrants or the children of immigrants, and even today Chicago remains a city of close-knit ethnic neighborhoods.

Earlier in this century Chicago acquired a reputation for colorful politicians, newspapermen and gangsters, but the city's rich cultural life is less well known. The Chicago Symphony under Georg Solti has long been considered one of America's "Big Five," the Lyric Opera has presented internationally renowned singers for 30 years, and jazz gréats Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman made their breakthroughs in Chicago. The city's major museums—the Art Institute, the Museum of Science and Industry and the Field Museum of Natural History—anchor its cultural establishment. The University of Chicago, famed for sociologists, economists and Nobel prizewinners, is one of 58 colleges and universities in the city.

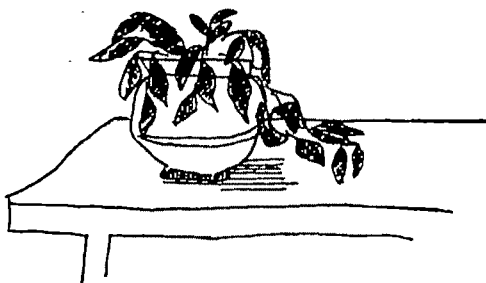
Particularly noteworthy is Chicago's architecture. After a great fire destroyed much of the city in 1871, some of America's most innovative architects—among them, Louis Sullivan and Daniel Burnham—set about rebuilding it in a bold style that became known as the "Chicago school." One of them, William Le Baron Jenny, erected the world's first steel-framed skyscraper there in 1884. Later, Wright, the founder of the "prairie school," which emphasized the low sweeping lines of the prairie landscape, and that exemplary modernist Mies van der Rohe practiced in the city. In the late 1960s Chicago led the resurgence of public sculpture in the United States as artists like Picasso, Henry Moore,

The American Review

Alexander Calder and Claes Oldenburg executed massive commissions to grace the downtown plazas dominated by the glass towers of the International Style.

In the literary realm Chicago's most distinctive contribution, as critic Alfred Kazin points out in his essay, has been a certain hard-bitten, naturalistic style of fiction. As practiced by writers like Theodore Dreiser, Frank Norris, Upton Sinclair, Sherwood Anderson, James T. Farrell, Richard Wright, Nelson Algren and occasionally Saul Bellow, this gritty realism focuses on the conflict between ordinary, often naive characters and the impersonal forces of modern city life. The protagonists of these novels typically define themselves by their response to the city itself. "I am an American, Chicago born—Chicago, that somber city—and go at things as I have taught myself, free-style, and will make a record in my own way," Bellow's hero proclaims in *The Adventures of Augie March*.

Since the mid-19th century Chicago writers and artists have been recording in their own individual ways the growth of Chicago, and their words and images add up to a kind of group portrait of the city's people and a statement of its place in the American imagination. "Chicago will remain the great laboratory of our democracy," Washington columnist George Will suggested recently. "This city of the plains is the great American city. . . . Chicago still exemplifies the essence of American history, and American yearning."



Voices from the Midwest

By ALFRED KAZIN

In this essay, Alfred Kazin, one of America's foremost critics, takes a personal look at Chicago's proud literary tradition. An astute observer of the synergy between writers and their cities, Kazin is best known for *On Native Grounds*, a classic of American literary history, and for a series of memoirs. Following Kazin, some of the writers closely connected with Chicago present views of the city which has so powerfully affected them.

IT took World War II to get this New Yorker to Chicago. This was in the dramatic winter of 1943, when as a reporter of the wartime scene I toured the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, then turning out sailors as the factories turned out tanks. I was as excited by the city on the lake—the city of terrible winters and an indigenous American force—as another writer might have been by Paris. I felt a wild energy and tension pouring in from the lake, from the sailors knocking each other around to keep warm and from the tense regiments of silent black recruits. These reminded me of the street-corner savagery of the gang in *Studs Lonigan*, the unleashed power of black resentment in Richard Wright's *Native Son*.

Growing up in New York and proud enough of our native sons Walt Whitman, Herman Melville and Henry James, I was more attached to American history by way of Chicago writers and *their* associations. My household gods were Carl Sandburg's Lincoln and Vachel Lindsay's reformist politician John Peter Altgeld. My favorite scenes were raw, early Chicago at the beginning of Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* and upper-class Chicago briefly seen near the close of *The Great Gatsby*. There F. Scott Fitzgerald's description of students at eastern colleges returning west at Christmastime made a glowing evocation in the great passage beginning "That's my Middle West."

I never tired of the chapter on the 1893 exposition in *The Education of Henry Adams*, of such Chicago history as I picked up from Thorstein Veblen's descriptions of the nouveaux riches in *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Henry Blake Fuller's *With the Procession*, stories by Hamlin Garland and Sherwood Anderson, the immortal wisecracks of "Mr. Dooley" in his neighborhood saloon, and the Depression fiction—as I too lived it in the 1930s—of writers more or less of my own generation and social condition: Richard Wright, Saul Bellow, Nelson Algren, Isaac Rosenfeld, Meyer Levin, Albert Halper.

My soul was more in Chicago literature than in the too big, resplendent city of New York. No Brooklyn kid growing up at the end of the subway line an hour from 42nd Street could feel that "the city," as we humbly called Manhattan, included *us*. Except for Walt Whitman, the literature of New York was Manhattan, imperial, aggressively sophisticated. Manhattan was the center of an empire; I was far from the center.

The American Review

The real trouble with New York literature, as with Henry James, Edith Wharton and even the greatest mind available to it, Herman Melville, was that it was enduringly traditionalist in its sympathies. Whitman, the great lover, the lover of all humanity, was more an iconoclast in New York than anywhere else. Chicago was the center of the Midwest, of expanding pioneer America, and the Midwest was populist. Poet Vachel Lindsay spoke for the whole Midwest in 1919 when he wrote—or rather chanted—"Bryan, Bryan, Bryan":

I brag and chant of Bryan, Bryan, Bryan,
Candidate for president who sketched a silver Zion,
The one American Poet who could sing outdoors
He brought in tides of wonder, of unprecedented splendor,
Wild roses from the plains, that made hearts tender,
All the funny circus silks
Of politics unfurled,
Bartlett pears of romance that were honey at the cores,
And torchlights down the street, to the end of the world.

Chicago literature was not always populist and insurgent, of course, but it was *new* and about the Chicago state of mind, which was feeling oneself new. Henry Blake Fuller, a delicate, oversensitive upper-class Chicagoan, wrote in *With the Procession* (1895) that Chicago was the symbol of America at the end of the 19th century. The town "labors under one disadvantage; it is the only great city in the world to which all its citizens have come for the one common, avowed object of making money. There you have its genesis, its growth, its end and object. . . . In this Garden City of ours every man cultivates his own little bed and his neighbor his; but who looks after the paths between?" As professor of medieval history at Harvard in the 1870s, Henry Adams was rocked back on his heels to hear a student say, "The degree of Harvard College is worth money to me in Chicago."

New York is an old city, long ago an imperial prize fought over by Europeans for whom it would seem a metropolis like their own. Chicago was native soil, the prairie that even by the end of the 19th century was in many places still unbroken. It would be the great and natural setting for all those midwesterners—Theodore Dreiser and George Ade from Indiana, Willa Cather from Nebraska, Sherwood Anderson from Ohio, Sinclair Lewis and F. Scott Fitzgerald from Minnesota, Ernest Hemingway from adjoining Oak Park, Edgar Lee Masters and Carl Sandburg from small towns in Illinois—who made 20th-century American literature out of the fierce passions of still pioneer America.

When Henry James returned to America in 1904 to write *The American Scene*, he visited Chicago to read his lecture "The Lesson of Balzac." Balzac, who praised James Fenimore Cooper because his America was exotically primitive, would certainly have found Chicago grist to his mill. James did not. A local reporter described him in Chicago, casting a weary eye on "the bleak parks, the jumbled gray masses of tenements and the engulfing avenues of warehouses and freight sheds." One day James, with novelist and University of Chicago professor Robert Herrick, was returning from a luncheon on the far South Side by

way of a suburban train along the wintry shore of the lake. They traveled, says James's biographer Leon Edel, "the smudged purlieus of the untidy city into the black gloom of the Loop." James sat huddled on the dingy bench of the railway car, draped in the loose folds of his mackintosh, his hands clasped about his baggy umbrella, "his face haggard under the shuttling blows of the Chicago panorama. 'What monstrous ugliness!' he murmured in a tone of pure physical anguish."

By contrast, here is Theodore Dreiser, whole left Terre Haute for Chicago at age 16. In his autobiography *Dawn* Dreiser remembered that to a boy just off the Indiana train, raw and muddy Chicago appeared "an Aladdin view in the Arabian Nights. Had I one gift to offer the world, it would be the delight of sensing the world as I then sensed it." Dreiser's career as a reporter began in the 1880s on the old *Chicago Globe*. As late as 1925, his greatest novel, *An American Tragedy*, invested its hero's childhood in Kansas City with details from Dreiser's own Chicago life in the '80s and '90s. Walking the streets of Chicago at the end of the century, Dreiser felt in his bones, as no one else at the time did, the stupendous fact of being a new man in a new city. On the eve of the new century, Dreiser caught the rawness of unfinished Chicago in the symbol of the prairie left on the outskirts. The first houses there looked like sentinels.

His recurrent image of coming to the big city has its most poignant expression in the second chapter of *Sister Carrie*. Carrie Meeber is 18 in 1889—Dreiser's age—when she arrives in Chicago: for Dreiser Chicago would always be the city he saw in his teens. In the innocence and awkwardness of *Sister Carrie's* heroine—who is fated to succeed without ever knowing why, who succeeds because she is a prize that her lover Hurstwood will die for—Dreiser caught the self-sustaining materialism that Chicago then stood for.

Realism became unthinkable without Chicago, Chicago without realism. But the word for Chicago and its literature was not so much *realism* as the *social question*. Chicago was the gathering of the forces steadily pressing on a new society jammed to suffocation with new immigrants. Chicago finally exploded.

In 1893, the year of the World's Columbian Exposition, brazen Chicago snatched for itself the glory of Columbus's discovery. It celebrated its triumph over older American cities with a succession of beaux-arts neoclassic white marble fronts that showed the city's determination to overcome the merest suspicion of cultural inferiority. But the marble fronts were plaster of Paris and hollow.

The same year, it was reported, 10 percent of the labor force in almost 3000 places were children under the age of 16. The Haymarket affair of 1886, when four anarchists were hanged because their propaganda had supposedly incited some unknown person to throw a bomb into a crowd, had already demonstrated the violence of class feeling in Chicago. Then came the panic of 1893, the Pullman strike of 1894, President Cleveland's calling out the troops against the protests of Illinois governor John Peter Altgeld.

Chicago was a battleground. Thanks to the work of social reformer Jane Addams and to the rise of social science investigation at the new University of Chicago, the city also became a prime specimen and social laboratory for writers at the university like novelist Robert Herrick and poet William Vaughan Moody, liberals like Robert Morss Lovett, theoreticians of the leisure class like Thorstein

The American Review

Veblen, philosophers like George Herbert Mead and John Dewey.

Because of the 1893 fair, Chicago became and remained a great meeting place and crossing point for writers. Mark Twain arrived in a private railway car but was too consumed with business worries even to look at the exposition. Theodore Dreiser, then a star reporter for the *St. Louis Republican*, escorted a bevy of school teachers, the prettiest of whom he later married. Henry Adams, who of course also arrived in a private railway car, later (in *The Education of Henry Adams*) compared Chicago at its historic emergence to Venice—another “trader’s city.” Architect Louis Sullivan, whose only commission by the fair’s organizers was the Transportation Building, bitterly protested the domination of the exposition by the beaux-arts neoclassicists. Adams laughed that “all trading cities had always shown traders’ taste, and to the stern purist of religious faith, no art was thinner than Venetian Gothic. All traders’ taste smelt of bric-a-brac; Chicago tried at least to give her taste a look of unity.”

If John Wellborn Root, partner of the fair’s chief architectural planner Daniel Burnham, had not died just as the fair was getting under way, the new functionalism of Louis Sullivan would have been as evident at the fair as it is in the entrance to his famous Carson, Pirie, Scott building. John Root’s sister-in-law Harriet Monroe spoke for the new Chicago vision when she wrote in her biography of Root that he had

wished to admit frankly in the architectural scheme the temporary character of the fair; it should be a great, joyous, luxuriant midsummer efflorescence, a splendid buoyant thing, flaunting its gay colors between the shifting blues of sky and lake exultantly, prodigally . . . Edifices . . . should not give the illusion of weight and permanence: they should be lighter, gayer, more decorative than the solid structures along our streets.

Sullivan’s former draftsman Frank Lloyd Wright eventually got his chance to build world-famous private homes in Chicago. But although Chicago’s architecture, universities and flamboyant literary reporters were to give a famous energy to the 20th-century scene, it was still a fact that Chicago writers were professionally tough and “difficult.” One reason was the enduring hold of New York and even of Boston on the literary marketplace. Chicago has never been an easy city in which to start and keep a big publishing firm. Harriet Monroe’s *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* (1912) symbolized even if it did not inaugurate the pre-war “Chicago Renaissance.” It was really quite timid, a philanthropic gesture from one of the old families. Its European editor, Ezra Pound, felt that he had to bombard genteel Harriet into accepting the new modernist stuff by friends like T.S. Eliot and H.D. (Hilda Doolittle). Carl Sandburg’s hearty poetry boosting Chicago as “Hog Butcher for the World,” “stompy, husky, brawling,” “City of the Big Shoulders,” was more to the point of what Harriet Monroe and the genteel side of old Chicago wanted as an image of an American city than Eliot’s self-mockingly neurasthenic early poems.

Chicago would never be altogether right for the avant-garde. Margaret Anderson, another midwesterner, started the *Little Review* in Chicago in 1914, but inevitably it moved to Paris. It died 25 years later after giving space to 23 differ-

ent systems of art representing 19 countries and publishing unusual poems and stories—now classics but then rejected by virtually all the 20th-century masters.

Sandburg as personification of brawling America became dear to the English, to all secondary-school teachers otherwise afraid of modern poetry and to practically anyone looking for a way to affirm the great 20th-century energies centering on Chicago. For a socialist, "Carl"—as everybody in Chicago called him—was certainly a town booster. Robert Frost would call him a fraud; Edmund Wilson charged that his biography of Lincoln, at least in the first version of *The Prairie Years*, was full of made-up stuff. Yet Sandburg knew better than Wilson what the Civil War was about. His biography of Lincoln is Sandburg's greatest poem. It is a hymn to the people, who recognized the war as one for *their* freedom.

Sandburg's poetry suffers from the glib emotions common to a swash-buckling Chicago newspaperman in the days when a newspaperman was a prima donna with a byline who could get away with anything. (*The Front Page* by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur remains one of the great American stage comedies because it preserves the tradition of Chicago newspaperdom as irresistible outrage.) His Lincoln biography held Sandburg down to a great American subject that was even deeper than he knew—the national craving for sacredness and a true hero.

Sandburg himself became an artifact as truly American as the cigarstore wooden Indian. What he supplied in addition to his personal minstrel act with guitar was populism, the radical democratic faith so congenial to the hungry, angry farmers and villagers of the early 20th century. There was an almost visceral regional instinct for protest that was captured by Vachel Lindsay, a more authentic poet than Sandburg. His best poem, "Bryan, Bryan, Bryan," is seldom found in the most influential anthologies of modern poetry. One editor uneasily referred to this poem about populist politician William Jennings Bryan as an example of "possible demagoguery." In defiance of the solemn East, Lindsay's comically raucous poem emphasizes a regional patriotism, a radical Midwest separatism:

In a miracle of health and speed, the whole breed abreast.
They leaped the Mississippi, blue border of the West,
From the Gulf to Canada, two thousand miles long:—
Against the towns of Tubal Cain,
Ah,—sharp was their song.
Against the ways of Tubal Cain, too cunning for the young,
The longhorn calf, the buffalo and wampus gave tongue.

The marked traditionalism and severe intellectualism of the University of Chicago, even before the experimental form that its president Robert Maynard Hutchins gave the Great Books program in the 1930s, was an obvious rejection of the localism and willful primitivism of Chicago bards. Yet a sharply argumentative style, fond of theory, can be seen in portraitists of Chicago low life like James T. Farrell, who managed to attend the university in defiance of the family faith; like Saul Bellow, who came under its influence though he graduated from

The American Review

Northwestern University; or like Nelson Algren, who was professionally contemptuous of university intellectuals.

Chicago writers seemed professionally tough, abrasive, militant. Farrell, when I met him in New York in 1934, was said to be a tremendous ideological scrapper, given to shouting "You phony!" at many an uptown liberal foolish enough to argue with his iron-plated views. When I met Nelson Algren in a Greenwich Village bar during the first weeks of the Castro regime, I was startled to hear a man so comfortable over his drink expressing his admiration for Castro putting on television the execution of political enemies. "That's what a revolution is," Algren explained.

In all this harshness there was a Chicago self-advertising that impressed me. Chicago writers put themselves forward, let their characters be grasped in the quickest way. They were blunt to a point. Unlike New Yorkers, they tended to speak clearly, with heavy stress on each syllable. If New York, as Lyndon Johnson was to say about Miami, was "not an American city," why was Chicago, with its solid ethnic wards, more "American" to Chicago writers brought up speaking Polish, Yiddish, Hungarian and trifling with nothing less than Aristotle and Plotinus at the University of Chicago?

The answer was that Chicago was always visibly and raucously making itself, and it was a concentrate that worked on writers like some abrasive chemical. Richard Wright's extraordinary *Native Son* and *Black Boy*, both still splendidly alive, show the power of Chicago on a talent that might have been nothing without the force of Chicago. Chicago writers could see the whole city before them, and they saw themselves reflected in it. They were rough and admired their own roughness because they saw themselves as examples of a society whose highest value seemed to be its own forcefulness.

The last time I saw James T. Farrell before his death in 1979, he was explaining to students that all current American novels seemed to him so much "straw." I instantly remembered the early photograph of the hard-boiled author of *Young Lonigan* (a novel about the Chicago Irish considered so scabrous in 1932 that Vanguard Press had to put it out in a special wrapper as a clinical document) showing a scowl, a mettlesome brow, and a cigarette pasted in one corner of his mouth. Only the glasses hinted that this was not Batting Studs from 58th Street and Prairie Avenue but that most sensitive, vulnerable and endearing fugitive from his gang, Danny O'Neill, soon to reveal himself in *A World I Never Made*, *No Star Is Lost*, *Father and Son*, *My Days of Anger*, *The Face of Time*.

Farrell's theoretical social-science approach to his own experience was exceptional among American realists. He felt that he had been liberated by the University of Chicago's sociology department. Its emphasis on the city, the street, the gang, awakened him to the imaginative possibilities in confronting his own ordeal among the second-generation Irish on the South Side. John Dewey and Thorstein Veblen were allied in his mind with George Herbert Mead, the founder of social behaviorism, and art historian Meyer Schapiro, whose emphasis on social factors was primary in Farrell's development as an American novelist exceptionally dominated by "ideas."

Social science from Chicago, both as theory and personal experience, gave Farrell his rebuttal to Catholicism and ethnic Irish pride. It was to keep him a

sort of socialist—increasingly right-wing—to the end of his life. Social science supplied the rationale behind the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy, a work so deeply planted in city life that we will always see a certain period in Chicago through Ferrell's eyes.

Farrell, after the first autobiographical volumes of the Danny O'Neill series, wrote worse and worse, unable to free himself from his obsessive memories of *A World I Never Made*. He hated the fact that his reputation was dominated by *Studs*. He never understood that the explosive force and bitter enmity that he brought to the gang—the enemy of Danny O'Neill—had rested on an objective framework lacking in his endless later work about himself. *Studs* is certainly not “straw.” It works all the way, because Farrell brought a relentless social logic to his primordial subject—the gang and the way its adolescent follies and brutalities keep the gang together but wreck the pseudotough Studs through their total spiritual poverty.

Farrell at his early best certainly saw all that lies behind the American cry for the good life. His key insight was that Studs is a totally self-deceived “consumer,” who can never see beyond the system that invents desires; he will never understand why, responding to every temptation, he will fail totally. Studs lives as a conditioned reflex. One of Farrell's triumphs is to show how bored Studs is for much of his life. Studs's greatest surprise is how meaningless things become.

Harsh and exciting as this social theory was, it made for a book that has lasted in the minds and affections of readers who would ordinarily dismiss the crudities of Studs, the brutalities of Weary Reilly, the pretensions of Mr. and Mrs. Lonigan, the soggy hell-threats of Father Gilhooley. There is a great residual power in a book that gives shape and meaning to the life that so many Americans have lived unconsciously. Farrell remained the plainest, most ungainly, sometimes most abrasive stylist imaginable. But his obsession, as he said, was with “the patterns of American destinies, and with presenting the manner in which they unfold in our time.” The words are typically flat Farrell, but he succeeded, in the beginning, because he meant to see the “destinies” of Americans as a social creation not always recognized by Americans themselves.

In contrast to Farrell, whose books sank because his most fruitful subject was the gang and not his own incessant struggles—his mind was simply not interesting enough to feed an interminable personal epic—Saul Bellow has made his own exceptional intelligence and powers of observation the moral and narrative center of novel after novel from *Dangling Man* (1944) to *The Dean's December* (1982). Bellow's novels constitute a personal epic, divided between his native Chicago and New York. What lifted Bellow from the rudimentary naturalism of Farrell, from the provocative violence of a Nelson Algren (who was actually far more interesting in many ways than Farrell but was finally done in by his monotonously tough stance)? What in particular saved Bellow from the tribalism of so many other Jewish writers?

Bellow took himself seriously and he took his *mind* seriously, in a way that most novelists of the city streets never could. He was the hero of his books, he was his own hero. In 1942, when I met Bellow in New York, I was astonished by his sense of destiny. He had not yet published a novel. But he was the first writer of my generation who talked of Lawrence and Joyce, Hemingway and

P, 6024

The American Review

Fitzgerald, not as books in the library but as fellow operators in the same business. As I walked him across Brooklyn Bridge and around my favorite streets overlooking the port of New York, his observations transformed my own city to me. He had the gift of making you see the most trivial event in the street because *he* happened to be there. At the same time he seemed to be measuring the hidden strength of all things in the universe. Over and over again in his fiction the central observer would dwell on the physical hardihood of other people, the thickness of their skins, the strength in their hands, the force in their chests.

This was the Chicago note over and again: the world around us is pure grit. One of Bellow's best stories, "Looking for Mr. Green," recalls the time when the future Nobel laureate was a welfare investigator in Chicago. The story hangs on the central observer's inability to find a man for whom he is holding a welfare check. Chicago in the Depression was a particularly desolate place. Yet:

it wasn't desolation that this made you feel, but rather a faltering of organization that set free a huge energy, an escaped, unattached, unregulated power from the giant raw place... people were compelled to match it. In their very bodies. He no less than others, he realized. His parents had been servants... they had never owed any service like this, which no one visible asked and probably flesh and blood could not even perform. Nor could anyone show that it should be performed; or see what the performance would lead to. That did not mean that he wanted to be released from it, he realized with a grimly pensive face. On the contrary. He had something to do. To be compelled to feel this energy and yet have nothing to do—that was horrible; that was suffering...

The passage is remarkable in the way it declares a distinctly contemplative, "alien" point of view about a subject identified wholly with power, force, the material. The language could not be plainer in its lucidity and exactness. Farrell could never have written a line so stylistically nimble as "a faltering of organization that set free a huge energy..." Yet the observer pits himself, by the power of thought alone, against this massive organization. The assumption of so much personal power is astonishing.

In the 40 years since *Dangling Man* that central observer has never lost confidence in his own power of thought, but he has grown increasingly unsure of the world around him. The special bounciness and joyfulness that made *The Adventures of Augie March* seem a wholly new departure for Bellow in 1953 have been steadily displaced by a political weariness and bitterness very common among ex-radical Jews of my generation. We were perhaps the last to believe in History as the *hoped-for* determinant of our lives, and History from the Holocaust to the Cold War, from the Depression to the nuclear age, has of course betrayed us.

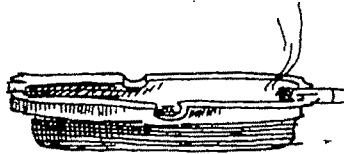
What is most striking about Bellow's latest Chicago novel, *The Dean's December*, is that Chicago, all of it from top to bottom, is so bitterly regarded by the central observer. The estrangement of the races, the violence of the inner city, the crass materialism and roughness of the leaders—all this makes the usual Bellow protagonist anguish with a despair never articulated so harshly before. Bellow originally began a book about Chicago, then put this material more or

less at the center of a novel. He says that he wrote it in an "emotional state. . . . Chicago is a very deceptive city because it has this marvelous front. Behind the face are things swept out of sight. It's highly organized for public relations about itself."

Bellow's novels are usually full of epigrams about the human state in general. In *The Dean's December* the observations are mostly about Chicago, and very wintry. "His face was charged with male strength in all the forms admired in Chicago." And: "She had been married to Mason Zaehner, who had practiced law on LaSalle Street for four decades. She had no need of Proust or Freud or Krafft-Ebing or Balzac or Aristophanes. Chicago had it all."

We are certainly a long way here from Dreiser a century ago seeing Chicago for the first time as an "Aladdin view in the Arabian nights." Chicago, the great eruption on the American scene, is not only no longer young, but without the idealism that has been the real romance of America. Chicago, the social matrix, the national laboratory *par excellence* in so many things, produced out of itself with vehement energy many literary opportunities that did not stay in Chicago, could not last out the course.

Did it matter if, like Farrell, one wrote endlessly about Chicago while living in New York? Or like Nelson Algren, ended up in Newark of all places? Did it matter if the youth of so many Chicago writers became their most reliable subject? I leave the answers to those who know Chicago firsthand. After all, I am a New Yorker who knows Chicago mostly from books. But my debt to Chicago is correspondingly large and deep, and has lasted as long as I have. □



Sister Carrie

By THEODORE DREISER

Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945) is probably best known for his 1925 novel *An American Tragedy*, yet his most important books may be his earliest ones, such as his first, *Sister Carrie*, published in 1900. In them, he established a new school of naturalism in America, presenting the urban masses with ruthless honesty and paving the way for the realistic writers who followed. The following excerpt from *Sister Carrie*, which recaptures the Chicago Dreiser discovered as a young man, is typical of his descriptions of the modern city's effect on the human personality.

WHEN she awoke at eight the next morning, Hanson had gone. Her sister was busy in the dining room, which was also the sitting room, sewing. She worked, after dressing, to arrange a little breakfast for herself, and then advised with Minnie as to which way to look. The latter had changed considerably since Carrie had seen her. She was now a thin, though rugged, woman of twenty-seven, with ideas of life colored by her husband's, and fast hardening into narrower conceptions of pleasure and duty than had ever been hers in a thoroughly circumscribed youth. She had invited Carrie, not because she longed for her presence, but because the latter was dissatisfied at home, and could probably get work and pay her board here. She was pleased to see her in a way, but reflected her husband's point of view in the matter of dollars a week to begin with. A shop girl was the destiny prefigured for the newcomer. She would get in one of the great shops and do well enough until—well, until something happened. Neither of them knew exactly what. They did not figure on promotion. They did not exactly count on marriage. Things would go on, though, in a dim kind of way until the better thing would eventuate, and Carrie would be rewarded for coming and toiling in the city. It was under such auspicious circumstances that she started out this morning to look for work.

Before following her in her round of seeking, let us look at the sphere in which her future was to lie. In 1889 Chicago had the peculiar qualifications of growth which made such adventuresome pilgrimage: even on the part of young girls plausible. Its many and growing commercial opportunities gave it widespread fame, which made of it a giant magnet, drawing to itself, from all quarters, the hopeful and the hopeless—those who had their fortune yet to make and those whose fortunes and affairs had reached a disastrous climax elsewhere. It was a city of over 500,000, with the ambition, the daring, the activity of a metropolis of a million. Its streets and houses were already scattered over an area of seventy-five square miles. Its population was not so much thriving upon established commerce as upon the industries which prepared for the arrival of others.

The sound of the hammer engaged upon the erection of new structures was everywhere heard. Great industries were moving in. The huge railroad corporations which had long before recognized the prospects of the place had seized upon vast tracts of land for transfer and shipping purposes. Street-car lines had been extended far out into the open country in anticipation of rapid growth. The city had laid miles and miles of streets and sewers through regions where, perhaps, one solitary house stood out alone—a pioneer of the populous ways to be. There were regions open to the sweeping winds and rain, which were yet lighted throughout the night with long, blinking lines of gas-lamps, fluttering in the wind. Narrow board walks extended out, passing here a house, and there a store, at far intervals, eventually ending on the open prairie.

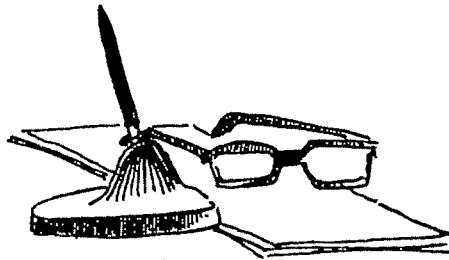
In the central portion was the vast wholesale and shopping district, to which the uninformed seeker for work usually drifted. It was a characteristic of Chicago then, and one not generally shared by other cities, that individual firms of any pretension occupied individual buildings. The presence of ample ground made this possible. It gave an imposing appearance to most of the wholesale houses, whose offices were upon the ground floor and in plain view of the street. The large plates of window glass, now so common, were then rapidly coming into use, and gave to the ground floor offices a distinguished and prosperous look. The casual wanderer could see as he passed a polished array of office fixtures, much frosted glass, clerks hard at work, and genteel businessmen in "nobby" suits and clean linen lounging about or sitting in groups. Polished brass or nickel signs at the square stone entrances announced the firm and the nature of the business in rather neat and reserved terms. The entire metropolitan center possessed a high and mighty air calculated to overawe and abash the common applicant, and to make the gulf between poverty and success seem both wide and deep.

Into this important commercial region the timid Carrie went. She walked east along Van Buren Street through a region of lessening importance, until it deteriorated into a mass of shanties and coal-yards, and finally verged upon the river. She walked bravely forward, led by an honest desire to find employment and delayed at every step by the interest of the unfolding scene, and a sense of helplessness amid so much evidence of power and force which she did not understand. These vast buildings, what were they? These strange energies and huge interests, for what purposes were they there? She could have understood the meaning of a little stonecutter's yard at Columbia City, carving little pieces of marble for individual use, but when the yards of some huge stone corporation came into view, filled with spur tracks and flat cars, transpierced by docks from the river and traversed overhead by immense trundling cranes of wood and steel, it lost all significance in her little world.

It was so with the vast railroad yards, with the crowded array of vessels she saw at the river, and the huge factories over the way, lining the water's edge. Through the open windows she could see the figures of men and women in working aprons, moving busily about. The great streets were wall-lined mysteries to her; the vast offices, strange mazes which concerned far-off individuals of importance. She could only think of people connected with them as counting money, dressing magnificently, and riding in carriages. What they dealt in, how they labored, to what end it all came, she had only the vaguest conception. It was all

The American Review

wonderful, all vast, all far removed, and she sank in spirit inwardly and feebly at the heart as she thought of entering any one of these mighty and asking for something to do—something that she could do—anythi



The Jungle

By UPTON SINCLAIR

The publication of *The Jungle* in 1906 brought sudden fame to its young author, Upton Sinclair (1878-1968). The novel, centering around the life of a Lithuanian immigrant family, graphically depicts working conditions in the Chicago meat-packing industry. Sinclair's description of the unsanitary practices in the packing plants led to public outcry and hastened the passage of the nation's first pure food laws. Sinclair continued to write novels, articles and plays in a crusading spirit, though never with the same dramatic success, for nearly six more decades.

IT was in the stockyards that Jonas's friend had gotten rich; and so to Chicago the party was bound. They knew that one word, Chicago—and that was all they needed to know, at least until they reached the city. Then, tumbled out of the cars without ceremony, they were no better off than before; they stood staring down the vista of Dearborn Street, with its big black buildings towering in the distance, unable to realize that they had arrived, and why, when they said 'Chicago,' people no longer pointed in some direction, but instead looked perplexed, or laughed, or went on without paying any attention. They were pitiable in their helplessness; above all things they stood in deadly terror of any sort of person in official uniform, and so whenever they saw a policeman they would cross the street and hurry by. For the whole of the first day they wandered about in the midst of deafening confusion, utterly lost; and it was only at night that, cowering in the doorway of a house, they were finally discovered and taken by the policeman to the station. In the morning an interpreter was found, and they were taken and put upon a car, and taught a new word—'stock-yards.' Their delight at discovering that they were to get out of this adventure without losing another share of their possessions, it would not be possible to describe.

They sat and stared out of the window. They were on a street which seemed to run on for ever, mile after mile—thirty-four of them; if they had known it—and each side of it one uninterrupted row of wretched little two-story frame buildings. Down every side street they could see it was the same—never a hill and never a hollow, but always the same endless vista of ugly and dirty little wooden buildings. Here and there would be a bridge crossing a filthy creek, with hard-baked mud shores and dingy sheds and docks along it; here and there would be a railroad crossing with a tangle of switches, and locomotives puffing, and rattling freight cars filing by; here and there would be a great factory, a dingy building with innumerable windows in it, and immense volumes of smoke

Excerpted from the book *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair. Published by Penguin Books. Permission granted by David Sinclair.

pouring from the chimneys, darkening the air above and making filthy the earth beneath. But after each of these interruptions, the desolate procession would begin again—the procession of dreary little buildings.

A full hour before the party reached the city they had begun to note the perplexing changes in the atmosphere. It grew darker all the time, and upon the earth the grass seemed to grow less green. Every minute, as the train sped on, the colors of things became dingier; the fields were grown parched and yellow, the landscape hideous and bare. And along with the thickening smoke they began to notice another circumstance, a strange, pungent odor. They were not sure that it was unpleasant, this odor; some might have called it sickening, but their taste in odors was not developed, and they were only sure that it was curious. Now, sitting in the trolley car, they realized that they were on their way to the home of it—that they had traveled all the way from Lithuania to it. It was now no longer something far off and faint, that you caught in whiffs; you could literally taste it, as well as smell it—you could take hold of it, almost, and examine it at your leisure. They were divided in their opinions about it. It was an elemental odor, raw and crude; it was rich, almost rancid, sensual and strong. There were some who drank it in as if it were an intoxicant; there were others who put their handkerchiefs to their faces. The new emigrants were still tasting it, lost in wonder, when suddenly the car came to a halt, and the door was flung open, and a voice shouted—'Stockyards!'

They were left standing upon the corner, staring; down a side street there were two rows of brick houses, and between them a vast half a dozen chimneys, tall as the tallest of buildings, touching the very sky, and leaping from them half a dozen columns of smoke, thick, oily, and black as night. It might have come from the center of the world, this smoke, where the fires of the ages still smoulder. It came as if self-imperilled, driving all before it, a perpetual explosion. It was inexhaustible; one stared, waiting to see it stop, but still the great streams rolled out. They spread in vast clouds overhead, writhing, curling; then, uniting in one giant river, they streamed away down the sky, stretching a black pall as far as the eye could reach.

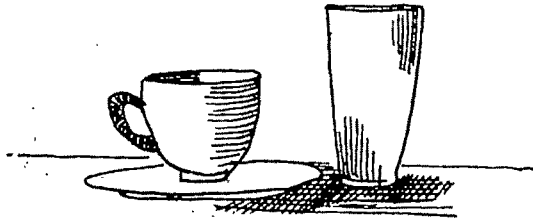
Then the party became aware of another strange thing. This, too, like the odor, was a thing elemental; it was a sound—a sound made up of ten thousand little sounds. You scarcely noticed it at first—it sunk into your consciousness, a vague disturbance, a trouble. It was like the murmuring of the bees in the spring, the whisperings of the forest; it suggested endless activity, the rumblings of a world in motion. It was only by an effort that one could realize that it was made by animals, that it was the distant lowing of ten thousand cattle, the distant grunting of ten thousand swine.

They would have liked to follow it up, but, alas, they had no time for adventures just then. The policeman on the corner was beginning to watch them; and so, as usual, they started up the street. Scarcely they had gone a block, however, before Jonas was heard to give a cry, and began pointing excitedly across the street. Before they could gather the meaning of his breathless ejaculations, he had bounded away, and they saw him enter a shop, over which was a sign: 'J. Szedvilas, Delicatessen.' When he came out again it was in company with a very stout gentleman in shirt sleeves and an apron, clasping Jonas by both hands and

laughing hilariously. Then Teta Elzbieta recollected suddenly that Szedvilas had been the name of the mythical friend who had made his fortune in America. To find that he had been making it in the delicatessen business was an extraordinary piece of good fortune at this juncture; though it was well on in the morning, they had not breakfasted, and the children were beginning to whimper.

Thus was the happy ending of a woeful voyage. The two families literally fell upon each other's necks—for it had been years since Jokubas Szedvilas had met a man from his part of Lithuania. Before half the day they were lifelong friends.

□



'Chicago'

By CARL SANDBURG

Carl Sandburg (1878-1967) was the most widely read—and heard—poet of his generation. As a young man, he made a tenuous living as handyman, soldier, salesman, reporter; through his poetry readings, Sandburg eventually became a familiar figure in national culture. He reflected a midwestern and populist America in a range of works, from his monumental study of Abraham Lincoln to his *Complete Poems* (1950), both of which won Pulitzer Prizes. The following early poem, first published in *Poetry* magazine in 1914, has captured for many Americans the essence of Chicago.

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:
They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted
women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the
gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and
children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city,
and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and
coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job,
here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against
the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,

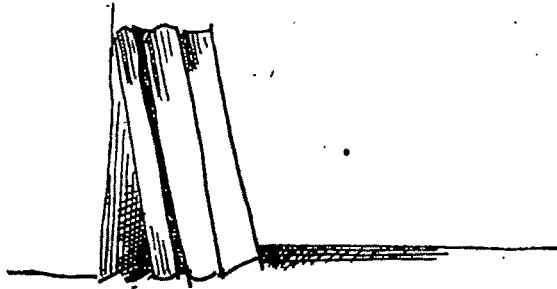
From *Chicago Poems* by Carl Sandburg, © 1916 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.;
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'Chicago'

Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the
heart of the people,

Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling, laughter of Youth, half naked, sweating,
proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with
Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.



American Hunger

By RICHARD WRIGHT

The life of Richard Wright (1908-1960) was a continuous journey toward wider horizons and perspectives. Born into a poor black sharecropping family in Mississippi, Wright made his way to Memphis, Tennessee, at age 17 and to Chicago a few years later. This transition from rural South to urban North mirrored that of many American blacks of the time. *Native Son*, Wright's powerful first novel, was a best seller in 1940 and a major breakthrough for the writer. *Black Boy* (1945) is an account of his youth in the South, and *American Hunger*, excerpted here, is the posthumously published continuation of that autobiography.

MY first glimpse of the flat black stretches of Chicago depressed and dismayed me, mocked all my fantasies. Chicago seemed an unreal city whose mythical houses were built of slabs of black coal wreathed in palls of gray smoke, houses whose foundations were sinking slowly into the dank prairie. Flashes of steam showed intermittently on the wide horizon, gleaming translucently in the winter sun. The din of the city entered my consciousness, entered to remain for years to come. The year was 1927.

What would happen to me here? Would I survive? My expectations were modest. I wanted only a job, *Hunger* had long been my daily companion. Diversion and recreation, with the exception of reading, were unknown. In all my life—though surrounded by many people—I had not had a single satisfying, sustained relationship with another human being and not having had any, I did not miss it. I made no demands whatever upon others.

The train rolled into the depot. Aunt Maggie and I got off and walked slowly through the crowds into the station. I looked about to see if there were signs saying: FOR WHITE—FOR COLORED. I saw none. Black people and white people moved about, each seemingly intent upon his private mission. There was no racial fear. Indeed, each person acted as though no one existed but himself. It was strange to pause before a crowded newsstand and buy a newspaper without having to wait until a white man was served. And yet, because everything was so new, I began to grow tense again, although it was a different sort of tension than I had known before. I knew that this machine-city was governed by strange laws and I wondered if I would ever learn them.

As we waited for a streetcar to take us to Aunt Cleo's home for temporary lodging, I looked northward at towering buildings of steel and stone. There were no curves here, no trees; only angles, lines, squares, bricks and copper wires. Occasionally the ground beneath my feet shook from some faraway pounding and I felt that this world, despite its massiveness, was somehow dangerously

fragile. Streetcars screeched past over steel tracks. Cars honked their horns. Clipped speech sounded about me. As I stood in the icy wind, I wanted to talk to Aunt Maggie, to ask her questions, but her tight face made me hold my tongue. I was learning already from the frantic light in her eyes the strain that the city imposed upon its people. I was seized by doubt. Should I have come here? But going back was impossible. I had fled a known terror, and perhaps I could cope with this unknown terror that lay ahead.

The streetcar came. Aunt Maggie motioned for me to get on and pushed me toward a seat in which a white man sat looking blankly out the window. I sat down beside the man and looked straight ahead of me. After a moment I stole a glance at the white man out of the corners of my eyes; he was still staring out the window, his mind fastened upon some inward thought. I did not exist for him; I was as far from his mind as the stone buildings that swept past in the street. It would have been illegal for me to sit beside him in the part of the South that I had come from.

The car swept past soot blackened buildings, stopping at each block, jerking again into motion. The conductor called street names in a tone that I could not understand. People got on and off the car, but they never glanced at one another. Each person seemed to regard the other as a part of the city landscape. The white man who sat beside me rose and I turned my knees aside and let him pass, and another white man sat beside me and buried his face in a newspaper. How could that possibly be? Was he conscious of my blackness?

We went to Aunt Cleo's address and found that she was living in a rented room. I had imagined that she lived in an apartment and I was disappointed. I rented a room from Aunt Cleo's landlady and decided to keep it until I got a job. I was baffled. Everything seemed makeshift, temporary. I caught an abiding sense of insecurity in the personalities of the people around me. I found Aunt Cleo aged beyond her years. Her husband, a product of a southern plantation, had, like my father, gone off and left her. Why had he left? My aunt could not answer. She was beaten by the life of the city, just as my mother had been beaten. Wherever my eyes turned they saw stricken, frightened black faces trying vainly to cope with a civilization that they did not understand. I felt lonely. I had fled one insecurity and had embraced another.

When I rose the next morning the temperature had dropped below zero. The house was as cold to me as the southern streets had been in winter. I dressed, doubling my clothing. I ate in a restaurant, caught a streetcar and rode south, rode until I could see no more black faces on the sidewalk. I had now crossed the boundary line of the Black Belt and had entered that territory where jobs were perhaps to be had from white folks. I walked the streets and looked into shop windows until I saw a sign in a delicatessen: PORTER WANTED.

I went in and a stout white woman came to me.

"Vat do you vant?" she asked.

The voice jarred me. She's Jewish, I thought, remembering with shame the obscenities I used to shout at Jewish storekeepers in Arkansas.

"I thought maybe you needed a porter," I said.

"Meester 'Offman, he eesn't here yet," she said. "Vill you vait?"

"Yes, ma'am."

The American Review

"Seet down."

"No, ma'am. I'll wait outside."

"But eet's cold out zhere," she said.

"That's all right," I said.

She shrugged. I went to the sidewalk. I waited for half an hour in the bitter cold, regretting that I had not remained in the warm store, but unable to go back inside. A bald, stoutish white man went into the store and pulled off his coat. Yes, he was the boss man. . . I went in.

"Zo you want a job?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," I answered, guessing at the meaning of his words.

"Where you vork before?"

"In Memphis, Tennessee."

"My brudder-in-law vorked in Tennessee vonce," he said.

I was hired. The work was easy, but I found to my dismay that I could not understand a third of what was said to me. My slow southern ears were baffled by their clouded, thick accents. One morning Mrs. Hoffman asked me to go to a neighboring store—it was owned by a cousin of hers—and get a can of chicken à la king. I had never heard the phrase before and I asked her to repeat it.

"Don't you know nosing?" she demanded of me.

"If you would write it down for me, I'd know what to get," I ventured timidly.

"I can't vitel!" she shouted in a sudden fury. "Vat kinda boy ees you?"

I memorized the separate sounds that she had uttered and went to the neighboring store.

"Mrs. Hoffman wants a can of Cheek Keeng Awr Lar Keeng," I said slowly, hoping that he would not think I was being offensive.

"All vite," he said, after staring at me a moment.

He put a can into a paper bag and gave it to me; outside in the street I opened the bag and read the label: Chicken à La King. I cursed, disgusted with myself. I knew those words. It had been her thick accent that had thrown me off. Yet I was not angry with her for speaking broken English; my English, too, was broken. But why could she not have taken more patience? Only one answer came to my mind. I was black and she did not care. Or so I thought. . . I was persisting in reading my present environment in the light of my old one. I reasoned thus: Though English was my native tongue and America my native land, she, an alien, could operate a store and earn a living in a neighborhood where I could not even live. I reasoned further that she was aware of this and was trying to protect her position against me.

(It was not until I had left the delicatessen job that I saw how grossly I had misread the motives and attitudes of Mr. Hoffman and his wife. I had not yet learned anything that would have helped me to thread my way through these perplexing racial relations. Accepting my environment at its face value, trapped by my own emotions, I kept asking myself what had black people done to bring this crazy world upon them?) □

Judgment Day

By JAMES T. FARRELL

James T. Farrell (1904-1979) aggressively identified himself with the Dreiser tradition of remorseless naturalism. In his many interconnected novels about Chicago, Farrell laid out an authentic and self-contained world, unsparingly recreating the working-class, Irish Catholic neighborhood of his youth. Though he wrote 52 books in a long and prolific career, the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy—the final book of which is excerpted here—was his most famous and best received work.

CHewing on a toothpick, Studs vacantly stared through the bay window, seeing the fat and loose-faced proprietor waddle from behind the horseshoe-shaped marble counter, and cross, against a background of hustling waitresses and people eating at white-clothed tables, to the counter case in front of the window. He noticed the sag in the man's broad trouser seat, and then he watched the dark, sexy-looking waitress scurry with a large tray of food. Three fellows, toward the front and close to the wall, were leaning across their food in talk and suddenly stretched back and laughed. Studs glanced in their direction. Three regular lads having supper, and then out to make a night of it! Where to? Show? Dance? Party? Cathouse? Speakeasy? There was a quality of warmth and friendliness, not for him, in the sight of these people eating fifty- and seventy-five cent suppers, and he wished he were back inside, eating the meal he had just stowed away. He read the slanting line of enamelled lettering across the window, merely to waste time. . . .

MARCEL'S RESTAURANT

Still a half hour before he'd meet Catherine. Chilled, he turned up his coat collar and about-faced. He saw that Dearborn Street, lined with tall and old flat-sided office buildings, with lighted windows seeming like pieces of yellow paper pasted against a dark setting, had only partially dried from the mizzling rain, and the raw snap in the air seemed to stab through to his bones. A few people walked down the deserted street, an automobile sputtered, turned a corner, and an elevated train rumbled by at Van Buren Street. Perhaps it was a south-bound train. It would stop at Fifty-eighth Street, and shines would bolt down the station steps to the street that he had once known so well. One night, a year ago, when he had nothing to do, he had gone walking in the old neighborhood feeling very much like a stranger who had no right to be there. Shrimp's funeral brought things like this to his mind, and kept them there. If he ever walked along Fifty-eighth Street again, Shrimp and Paulie and Hink and Arnold would all seem to walk with him like ghosts.

Reprinted from *Studs Lonigan: A Trilogy* (Judgment Day) by permission of Vanguard Press, Inc. © 1935 by Vanguard Press, Inc. © renewed 1963 by James T. Farrell.

The American Review

He halted on the opposite side of Van Buren Street to look at the ordered rows of black and tan oxfords in the window of Hassel's shoe store. Used to have more clothes than he had now, he thought, his eyes straying from shoe to shoe until he fastened upon a pair of black brogans with narrow, perforated toes. But he oughtn't to spend five-fifty on shoes when he still had two pairs that would do him for a while.

At Jackson Boulevard he stood on the curb irresolutely, while several automobiles shot past him. A tall fellow stared at him. Telling himself that the lad was constructed like a power machine, Studs attempted to appear unobtrusively firm in returning the glance. The fellow's stare was unrelenting. Studs crossed the street, and walked by the Great Northern Hotel, stopping to study a news photograph of Lindbergh and his wife in flying outfit with a plane behind them. He thought that Lindbergh was a fearless-looking brute, all right, and tried to imagine what it would be like to be the hero of the nation and to have been the first man to fly alone across the Atlantic, winning twenty-five thousand dollars, a society wife, and undying fame. Lucky boy! Realizing what Lindbergh was, he began to feel measly and insignificant, and turned away from the picture.

Maybe if he had gotten into the war he might have been an aviator, and when the prize was offered he might have competed with Lindbergh, beat him across the Atlantic and become more famous than the hero of the nation. He began to feel joyful, seeing himself, Studs Lonigan, as Lindbergh, instead of the Studs Lonigan that he was at the moment. Then the world would have known what he was, what kind of stuff he was made of! Damn tootin', it would.

Two tall youths approached him. From force of habit, he clenched his fists, and his body tensed for action. He saw that they were wearing smart and expensive clothes, with gray stetsons, and their faces were bright and shiny. Doggy fellows, he murmured to himself. The fellow on the outside, in the gray coat, was talking in a highbrow accent. Studs guessed they were collegiate or just out of college. He turned to stare after them, noticing the cut of their beltless overcoats. The one in the gray coat laughed in a refined low-pitched way. Boy scouts in long pants! His fists again automatically clenched.

Walking on, seeing the lights of Randolph Street before him, he wondered if they were college football players. That was what Studs Lonigan might have been. Even if he did admit it, he had been a damn good quarterback. If he only hadn't been such a chump, bumming from school to hang around with skunky Weary Reilley and Paulie Haggerty until he was so far behind at high school that it was no use going. It wouldn't have been so hard to have studied and done enough homework to get by, and then he could have set the high school gridiron afire gone to Notre Dame and made himself a Notre Dame immortal, maybe, alongside of George Gypp, the Four Horsemen, Christy Flannagan and Carrideo. How many times in a guy's life couldn't he kick his can around the block for having played chump?

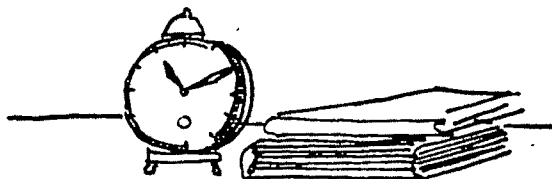
"Lad, I just hit town and I'm on my uppers. I've been carrying the banner all winter, an' I'm hungry," said a seedy man, taller and huskier than Studs, shivering without an overcoat.

"Sorry, but I haven't got anything," Studs replied in a voice of controlled and even cautious surliness.

"Christ, lad, only a nickel or a dime for a warm cup of coffee. I'm hungry!" the bum said, doggedly following Studs' heels.

Wheeling around, Studs snapped, "Listen, fellow, I haven't got it." He perceived a craven look come into the man's face, and frowning, his own courage mounted, "For Christ sake, can't you understand English?"

The bum turned and zigzagged along in the direction of Van Buren Street, while Studs watched, still flushed with his own bravery. The fellow had the advantage of weight and height, and was in at least as good physical trim as he was. He could have slugged Studs. It must have been something of the old Studs Lonigan left in him that had led to his not taking sass, risking a fight. He imagined himself fighting with the bum on the darkened and almost deserted street, a long and gruelling battle, slugging back and forth, both of them staggering and bloody, until Studs would put every ounce of spirit and energy into a last hay-maker, and the bum would tumble backward, fall over the curb into the street, and know that he had met a better man. Hands on hips, he sneered, and watched the bum diminish as he pursued a ziggedy course along the sidewalk. Studs turned and continued, himself fighting like Jack Dempsey used to. He began to feel that Christ, he could have spared a dime. But then, if the bum needed money, why didn't he work for it? He knew that in thinking this he was just trying to convince himself that he had done the right thing, when he really acted like a bastard over a measly dime. There were plenty of guys in the red now, meeting tough luck, out of work and not able to get anything. Some of his own friends, too—look at Joe Thomas, and Stan, and then there was Les almost in the same boat. Plenty of guys, all right, broke, begging, and how could he have known whether this fellow was one of them, or just a regular bum? He shrugged his shoulders, deciding that he had plenty of things of his own to worry about without bothering over every bum who came along the street. □



'A Chicago Greek Boyhood'

By HARRY MARK PETRAKIS

Chicago's vast mosaic of ethnic neighborhoods is an important element in its past and its present. Harry Mark Petrakis, born in 1923 of Greek immigrant parents, grew up as part of Chicago's extensive Greek community, and his six novels and two short-story collections draw directly on that experience. Even today Chicago has one of the largest Greek populations of any city in the world. The following essay is taken from Petrakis's autobiography, *Stelmark: A Family Recollection*, published in 1970.

THERE was one storekeeper I remember above all others in my youth. It was shortly before I became ill, spending a good portion of my time with a motley group of varied ethnic ancestry. We contended with one another to deride the customs of the old country. On our Saturday forays into neighborhoods beyond our own, to prove we were really Americans, we ate hot dogs and drank Cokes. If a boy didn't have ten cents for this repast he went hungry, for he dared not bring a sandwich from home made of the spiced meats our families ate.

One of our untamed games was to seek out the owner of a pushcart or a store, unmistakably an immigrant, and bedevil him with a chorus of insults and jeers. To prove allegiance to the gang it was necessary to reserve our fiercest malevolence for a storekeeper or peddler belonging to our own ethnic background.

For that reason I led a raid on the small, shabby grocery of old Barba Nikos, a short, sinewy Greek who walked with a slight limp and sported a flaring, handlebar mustache.

We stood outside his store and dared him to come out. When he emerged to do battle, we plucked a few plums and peaches from the baskets on the sidewalk and retreated across the street to eat them while he watched. He waved a fist and hurled epithets at us in ornamental Greek.

Aware that my mettle was being tested, I raised my arm and threw my half-eaten plum at the old man. My aim was accurate and the plum struck him on the cheek. He shuddered and put his hand to the stain. He stared at me across the street, and although I could not see his eyes, I felt them tear my flesh. He turned and walked silently back into the store. The boys slapped my shoulders in admiration, but it was a hollow victory that rested like a stone in the pit of my stomach.

At twilight when we disbanded, I passed the grocery alone on my way home. There was a small light burning in the store and the shadow of the old man's body outlined against the glass. Goaded by remorse, I walked to the door and

Stelmark: A Family Recollection. © 1970 by Harry Mark Petrakis. Publisher David McKay Co. Inc. By permission of Toni Strassman.

entered.

The old man moved from behind the narrow wooden counter and stared at me. I wanted to run and flee, but by then it was too late. As he motioned for me to come closer, I braced myself for a curse or a blow.

"You were the one," he said, finally, in a harsh voice.

I nodded mutely.

"Why did you come back?"

I stood there unable to answer.

"What's your name?"

"Haralambos," I said, speaking to him in Greek.

He looked at me in shock. "You are Greek!" he cried, "A Greek boy attacking a Greek grocer!" He stood appalled at the immensity of my crime. "All right," he said coldly. "You are here because you wish to make amends." His great mustache bristled in concentration. "Four plums, two peaches," he said. "That makes a total of 75 cents. Call it 75. Do you have 75 cents, boy?"

I shook my head.

"Then you will work it off," he said. "Fifteen cents an hour into 75 cents makes"—he paused—"five hours of work. Can you come here Saturday morning?"

"Yes," I said.

"Yes, Barba Nikos," he said sternly. "Show respect."

"Yes, Barba Nikos," I said.

"Saturday morning at eight o'clock," he said. "Now go home and say thanks in your prayers that I did not loosen your impudent head with a solid smack on the ear." I needed no further urging and fled.

Saturday morning, still apprehensive, I returned to the store. I began by sweeping, raising clouds of dust in dark and hidden corners. I washed the windows, whipping the squeegee swiftly up and down the glass in a fever of fear that some member of the gang would see me. When I finished I hurried back inside.

For the balance of the morning I stacked cans, washed the counter, and dusted bottles of yellow wine. A few customers entered, and Barba Nikos served them. A little after twelve o'clock he locked the door so he could eat lunch. He cut himself a few slices of sausage, tore a large chunk from a loaf of crisp-crust bread, and filled a small cup with a dozen black shiny olives floating in brine. He offered me the cup. I could not help myself and grimaced.

"You are a stupid boy," the old man said, "You are not really Greek, are you?"

"Yes, I am."

"You might be," he admitted grudgingly. "But you do not act Greek. Wrinkling your nose at these fine olives. Look around this store for a minute. What do you see?"

"Fruits and vegetables," I said, "Cheese and olives and things like that."

He stared at me with a massive scorn. "That's what I mean," he said. "You are a bonehead. You don't understand that a whole nation and a people are in this store."

I looked uneasily toward the storeroom in the rear, almost expecting someone to emerge.

"What about olives?" he cut the air with a sweep of his arm. "There are olives of many shapes and colors. Pointed black ones from Kalamata, oval ones from Amphissa, pickled green olives and sharp tangy yellow ones. Achilles carried black olives to Troy and after a day of savage battle leading his Myrmidons, he'd rest and eat cheese and ripe black olives such as these right here. You have heard of Achilles, boy, haven't you?"

"Yes," I said.

"Yes, Barba Nikos."

"Yes, Barba Nikos," I said.

He motioned at the row of jars filled with spices. "There is origanon there and basilikon and daphne and sesame and miantanos, all the marvelous flavorings that we have used in our food for thousands of years. The men of Marathon carried small packets of these spices into battle, and the scents reminded them of their homes, their families, and their children.

He rose and tugged his napkin free from around his throat. "Cheese, you said. Cheese! Come closer, boy, and I will educate your abysmal ignorance." He motioned toward a wooden container on the counter. "That glistening white delight is feta, made from goat's milk, packed in wooden buckets to retain the flavor. Alexander the Great demanded it on his table with his casks of wine when he planned his campaigns."

He walked limping from the counter to the window where the piles of tomatoes, celery, and green peppers clustered. "I suppose all you see here are some random vegetables?" He did not wait for me to answer. "You are dumb again. These are some of the ingredients that go to make up a Greek salad. Do you know what a Greek salad really is? A meal in itself, an experience, an emotional involvement. It is created deftly and with grace. First, you place large lettuce leaves in a big, deep bowl." He spread his fingers and moved them slowly, carefully, as if he were arranging the leaves. "The remainder of the lettuce is shredded and piled in a small mound," he said. "Then comes celery, cucumbers, tomatoes sliced lengthwise, green peppers, origanon, green olives, feta, avocado, and anchovies. At the end you dress it with lemon, vinegar, and pure olive oil, glistening golden in the light."

He finished with a heartfelt sigh and for a moment closed his eyes. Then he opened one eye to mark me with a baleful intensity. "The story goes that Zeus himself created the recipe and assembled and mixed the ingredients on Mount Olympus one night when he had invited some of the other gods to dinner."

He turned his back on me and walked slowly again across the store, dragging one foot slightly behind him. I looked uneasily at the clock, which showed that it was a few minutes past one. He turned quickly and startled me. "And everything else in here," he said loudly. "White beans, lentils, garlic, crisp bread, kokoretsi, meat balls, mussels and clams." He paused and drew a deep, long breath. "And the wine," he went on, "wine from Samos, Santorini, and Crete, retsina and mavrodaphne, a taste almost as old as water . . . and then the fragrant melons, the pastries, yellow diples and golden loukoumades, the honey custard galatobouriko. Everything a part of our history, as much a part as the exquisite sculpture in marble, the bearded warriors, Pan and the oracles at Delphi, and the nymphs dancing in the shadowed groves under Homer's glittering moon." He paused,

out of breath again, and coughed harshly. "Do you understand now, boy?"

He watched my face for some response and then grunted. We stood silent for a moment until he cocked his head and stared at the clock. "It is time for you to leave," he motioned brusquely toward the door. "We are square now. Keep it that way."

I decided the old man was crazy and reached behind the counter for my jacket and cap and started for the door. He called me back. From a box he drew out several soft, yellow figs that he placed in a piece of paper, "A bonus because you worked well," he said. "Take them. When you taste them, maybe you will understand what I have been talking about."

I took the figs and he unlocked the door and I hurried from the store. I looked back once and saw him standing in the doorway, watching me, the swirling tendrils of food curling like mist about his head.

I ate the figs late that night. I forgot about them until I was in bed, and then I rose and took the package from my jacket. I nibbled at one, then ate them all. They broke apart between my teeth with a tangy nectar, a thick sweetness running like honey across my tongue and into the pockets of my cheeks. In the morning when I woke, I could still taste and inhale their fragrance.

I never again entered Barba Nikos's store. My spell of illness, which began some months later, lasted two years. When I returned to the streets I had forgotten the old man and the grocery. Shortly afterwards my family moved from the neighborhood.

Some twelve years later, after the war, I drove through the old neighborhood and passed the grocery. I stopped the car and for a moment stood before the store. The windows were stained with dust and grime, the interior bare and desolate, a store in a decrepit group of stores marked for razing so new structures could be built.

I have been in many Greek groceries since then and have often bought the feta and Kalamata olives. I have eaten countless Greek salads and have indeed found them a meal for the gods. On the holidays in our house, my wife and sons and I sit down to a dinner of steaming, buttered pilaf like my mother used to make and lemon-egg avgolemono and roast lamb richly seasoned with cloves of garlic. I drink the red and yellow wines, and for dessert I have come to relish the delicate pastries coated with honey and powdered sugar. Old Barba Nikos would have been pleased.

But I have never been able to recapture the halcyon flavor of those figs he gave me on that day so long ago, although I have bought figs many times. I have found them pleasant to my tongue, but there is something missing. And to this day I am not sure whether it was the figs or the vision and passion of the old grocer that coated the fruit so sweetly I can still recall their savor and fragrance after almost thirty years.

□

'Beverly Hills, Chicago'

By GWENDOLYN BROOKS

Since the publication in 1945 of her first book of poetry, *A Street in Bronzeville*, Gwendolyn Brooks has illuminated the everyday experience of the black urban poor, centering on Chicago, where she has lived for more than 60 years. In addition to numerous books of poetry, her work includes a novel, children's stories and autobiography. In 1969, she succeeded Carl Sandburg as the poet laureate of the state of Illinois. The following poem, the title of which refers to an affluent residential section of Chicago, was taken from *Annie Allen*, for which Brooks won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1950.

("and the people live till they have white hair")

E.M. Price

The dry brown coughing beneath their feet,
(Only a while, for the handyman is on his way)
These people walk their golden gardens.
We say ourselves fortunate to be driving by today.

That we may look at them, in their gardens where
The summer ripeness rots. But not raggedly.
Even the leaves fall down in lovelier patterns here.
And the refuse, the refuse is a neat brilliancy.

When they flow sweetly into their houses
With softness and slowness touched by that everlasting gold,
We know what they go to. To tea. But that does not mean
They will throw some little black dots into some water and add sugar and the
juice of the cheapest lemons that are sold.

While downstairs that woman's vague phonograph bleats, "Knock me a kiss."
And the living all to be made again in the sweatingest physical manner
Tomorrow. . . . Not that anybody is saying that these people have no trouble.
Merely that it is trouble with a gold-flecked beautiful banner.

Nobody is saying that these people do not ultimately cease to be. And
Sometimes their passings are even more painful than ours.

"Beverly Hills, Chicago" from *The World of Gwendolyn Brooks* by Gwendolyn Brooks.
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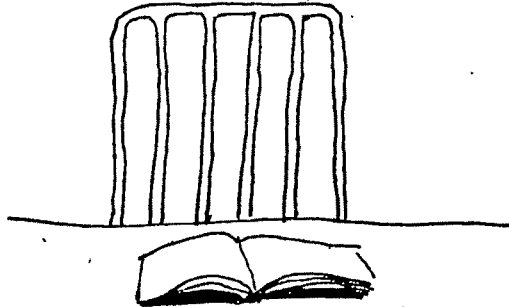
'Beverly Hills, Chicago'

It is just that so often they live till their hair is white.
They make excellent corpses, among the expensive flowers....

Nobody is furious. Nobody hates these people.
At least, nobody driving by in this car.
It is only natural, however, that it should occur to us
How much more fortunate they are than we are.

It is only natural that we should look and look
At their wood and brick and stone
And think, while a breath of pine blows,
How different these are from our own.

We do not want them to have less.
But it is only natural that we should think we have not enough.
We drive on, we drive on.
When we speak to each other our voices are a little gruff.



Herzog

By SAUL BELLOW

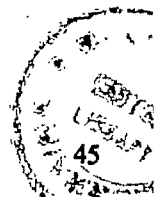
Saul Bellow, one of America's most important novelists and winner of the 1976 Nobel Prize for literature, grew up in Chicago and has resided there since 1962. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Bellow felt early on that "the life lived in great manufacturing centers, with their slaughter houses, their great slums, prisons, hospitals and schools, was also a human life." In distinguished novels like *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953), *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1969) and *Humboldt's Gift* (1976), understanding the moral significance of this "human life" is a passionate struggle for Bellow's main characters. This is especially true for the hero of the 1964 novel *Herzog*, one of Bellow's most autobiographical works, which is excerpted here.

NEW YORK could not hold him now. He had to go to Chicago to see his daughter, confront Madeleine and Gersbach. The decision was not reached; it simply arrived. He went home and changed from the new clothes in which he had been diverting himself, into an old seersucker suit. Luckily, he had not unpacked when he came back from the Vineyard. He checked the valise quickly and left the apartment. Characteristically, he was determined to act without clearly knowing what to do, and even recognizing that he had no power over his impulses. He hoped that on the plane, in the clear atmosphere, he would understand why he was flying.

The superjet carried him to Chicago in ninety minutes, due west, flying against the rotation of the planet and giving him an extension of afternoon and sunlight. Beneath, the white clouds were foaming. And the sun, like the spot that inoculated us against the whole of disintegrating space. He looked into the blue vacancy and at the sharp glitter of wingborne engines. When the plane bucked, he held his lip with his teeth. Not that he feared flying, but it occurred to him that if the ship were to crash, or simply explode (as had happened over Maryland recently, when human figures were seen to spill and fall like shelled peas), Gersbach would become June's guardian. Unless Simkin tore up the will. *Dear Simkin, shrewd Simkin, tear up that will!* There would also be two insurance policies, one bought by Father Herzog for his son Moshe. Only see how this child, young Herzog, had turned out—wrinkled, perplexed, pain at heart. I'm telling myself the truth. As heaven is my witness. The stewardess offered him a drink, which he refused with a shake of the head. He felt incapable of looking into the girl's pretty, healthful face.

As the jet landed, Herzog turned back his watch. He hurried from gate 38 and down the long corridor to the auto rental office. To identify himself, he had

an American Express card, his Massachusetts' driver's license, his university credentials. He himself would have been suspicious of such diverse addresses, to say nothing of the soiled, wrinkled seersucker suit worn by this applicant, Moses Elkanah Herzog; but the official who took his application, a sweet-mannered, bosomy, curly, fat-nosed little woman (even in his present state Herzog felt moved to smile faintly) only asked whether he wanted a convertible or a hard-top. He chose the hard-top, teal blue, and drove off, trying to find his way under the greenish glare of the lamps and dusty sunlight amid unfamiliar signs. He followed the winding cloverleaf into the Expressway and then joined the speeding traffic—in this zone, 60 m.p.h. He did not know these new sections of Chicago. Clumsy, stinking, tender Chicago, dumped on its ancient lake bottom; and this murky orange west, and the hoarseness of factories and trains, spilling gases and soot on the newborn summer. Traffic was heavy coming from the city, not on Herzog's side of the road, and he held the right lane looking for familiar street names. After Howard Street he was in the city proper and knew his way. Leaving the Expressway at Montrose, he turned east and drove to his late father's house, a small two-story brick building, one of a row built from a single blueprint—the pitched roof, the cement staircase inset on the right side, the window boxes the length of the front-room windows, the lawn a fat mound of grass between the sidewalk and the foundation; along the curb, elms and those shabby cottonwoods with blackened, dusty, wrinkled bark, and leaves that turned very tough by midsummer. There were also certain flowers, peculiar to Chicago, crude, waxy things like red and purple crayon bits, in a special class of false-looking natural objects. These foolish plants touched Herzog because they were so graceless, so corny. He was reminded of his father's devotion to his garden, when old Herzog became a property owner toward the end of his life—how he squirted his flowers at evening with the hose and how rapt he looked, his lips quietly pleased and his straight nose relishing the odor of the soil. To right and left, as Herzog emerged from the rented hard-top, the sprinklers turned and danced, scattering bright drops, fizzing out iridescent veils. And this was the house in which Father Herzog had died a few years ago, on a summer night, sitting up in bed suddenly, saying, "*Ich shtarb!*" And then he died, and that vivid blood of his turned to soil, in all the shrunken passages of his body. And then the body, too—ah, God!—wastes away; and leaves its bones, and even the bones at last wear away and crumble to dust in that shallow place of deposit. And thus humanized, this planet in its galaxy of stars and worlds goes from void to void, infinitesimal, aching with its unrelated significance. *Unrelated?* Herzog, with one of his Jewish shrugs, whispered, "*Nu, maile....*" Be that as it may. □



Lincoln

By GORE VIDAL

This account of the beginnings of Abraham Lincoln's presidency is drawn from *Lincoln*, a novel by Gore Vidal. The first part was reproduced in our last issue, Autumn 1984. This is the concluding part. Novelist, playwright and essayist, Gore Vidal is among the most distinguished American writers of today.

THE sidewalk in front of Willard's Hotel seemed to hum and throb, and John Hay felt as if he were still on the cars as he made his way through the crowd of people—mostly colored, he noticed—who were on hand to get a look at Mr. Lincoln, who was not visible; unlike Mrs. Lincoln, who was, as well as the three Lincoln sons, the six lady relations of Mrs. Lincoln's, and the two Lincoln secretaries, John George Nicolay (born twenty-nine years ago in Bavaria; moved to Illinois as a child; grew up to edit a Pittsfield newspaper), and John Hay himself, aged twenty-two, a graduate of Brown who had been admitted to the Illinois bar exactly two weeks ago; thanks, in part, to the fact that his uncle was Springfield's leading lawyer and an old associate of Lincoln's, and thanks, again in part, to the fact, that Hay had gone to school with Nicolay, Lincoln's secretary during the campaign for the presidency. Hay had been able to make himself so useful to Nicolay in the campaign that Nico had said to the President-elect, "Can't we take Johnny to Washington with us?" and although Lincoln had groaned and said, "We can't take an Illinois down with us to Washington," John Hay had been duly employed as a presidential secretary. Small, wiry, handsome, John Hay intended to enjoy as much as possible his sudden elevation in the world.

At Brown, Hay had wanted to be a poet; in fact, he was a poet who wrote verse that got published. But that was not exactly a career or a living. For a time, the pulpit had appealed to him—except for the business about God. Although the law had no great appeal to him, for a young man named Hay there was not much choice. He worked in his uncle's office, where he got to know his uncle's friend, Mr. Lincoln, a man whose ups and downs were much talked of in Springfield, particularly the downs. Mr. Lincoln was supposed to have gone mad for two weeks just before what was to have been his wedding day, which had to be postponed. He had gone into a decline after losing his seat in Congress, and despite the campaigning that he had done for the new Whig President, Zachary Taylor, he was offered no government appointment other than the secretaryship of the Oregon Territory, which Mrs. Lincoln had turned down for him. Home in Springfield, Lincoln practiced law with the brilliant, hard-drinking William Herndon and let himself, many said, sink into apathy, while making a good

From *Lincoln*, by Gore Vidal.

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of money as a railroad lawyer. When the great debate on slavery began. Mr. Lincoln found his voice, and after his challenge to Stephen Douglas, he had come to personify the new Republican Party and the new politics—whatever they were. Hay was never quite certain just where Mr. Lincoln meant to take the nation, but he did know that wherever that was, he was going to go, too.

At the center of the lobby, the manager of Willard's was greeting Mrs. Lincoln, who was tired and not, Hay could see, in the best of moods. Nicolay and Hay had their code words for the great folk. Mary Todd Lincoln was known, depending on her mood, as either Madam or the Hellcat. Mr. Lincoln was either the Ancient or, in honor of the previous year's visit to Washington by the first ambassadors from that awesome Japanese official known as the Tycoon, the Tycoon.

The slender Nicolay was at the Hellcat's side, smiling grimly through his long, pointed, youthful beard. Although Hay could not hear what the Hellcat was saying, he suspected that a complaint was being registered. Suddenly, Hay found himself next to the oldest Lincoln son, Robert, a seventeen-year-old Harvard freshman who said, with pleasure, "Johnny!" as if they had not spent the past twelve days and nights cooped up together on the cars from Springfield, playing cards in the baggage car and, occasionally, taking a swig from a bottle that Lamon always carried—"just in case," he'd say, shoving it into the great side pocket that contained a slingshot, a pair of brass knuckles, a hunting knife, and a derringer.

"I think Nicolay needs some help," said Hay, maneuvering himself through the crowd to Mrs. Lincoln's side just as her normal high color was beginning to take on that dusky glow that was the first sign of a Hellcat storm.

"Mrs. Lincoln!" Hay beamed, boyishly; but then with his youthful face he had no other way of looking, to his chagrin. Strange men often addressed him as Sonny; his cheek was often patted; he knew that he must, very soon, grow a moustache, if he could. "Your trunks are already in your rooms." This was a lie. But he knew Mrs. Lincoln's passionate attachment to her baggage and its integrity.

"Oh, Johnny! You do relieve my mind!" Mary Todd Lincoln's smile was, suddenly, winning and so, Hay was won; she took his arm and they swept through the hotel lobby to the main staircase, as the manager and his outriders cleared a path for their considerable party.

Outside, the crowd dispersed. David and Annie were disappointed not to have seen the archfiend himself. "They say he's got whiskers now, so as no one will know him," said David, as they walked up Thirteenth Street.

"But once people get used to the whiskers, they'll know him after a while." Annie stopped in front of a raw wood picket fence. Through the gap between two slats they could see a vacant lot where a number of young men were drilling with old rifles.

"Who are they?" asked David.

"The National Volunteers," Annie whispered, her breath white between them. "One of them is a friend of Brother Isaac's."

"What are they drilling for?"

"Inauguration Day. Come on. Let's go. I don't want them to see me."

David and Annie hurried down the street. "They're crazy," he said, "to take on the whole U.S. Army."

In Parlor Suite Six at Willard's Hotel, it was agreed that the National Volunteers were indeed crazy but potentially dangerous: such was the intelligence already received by the suite's principal resident, the bewhiskered Abraham Lincoln, who now sat in a huge armchair in the parlor as his two younger sons, Willie and Tad, climbed over him, and Hay smiled sweetly at this domestic scene. He had never hated two children more than these. Tad, at seven, could not be understood due to some sort of malformation of his palate, while the ruthlessly eloquent and intelligent Willie, at ten, could be understood all too well. Willie was a tendentious explainer, who regarded Johnny Hay as a somewhat dull-witted playmate.

While the children shouted and pummeled their father, Seward and Lamon discussed with Lincoln, as best they could, arrangements for his security. Mary had withdrawn to the bedroom to greet her—Hay prayed—not-mythical luggage.

Nicolay was at the door to the parlor, looking somewhat alarmed. Then Hay saw why. Behind Nicolay towered the unmistakable figure of Charles Sumner, senator from Massachusetts, heir to Daniel Webster, greatest of the Senate's scholars, an orator of such power that audiences had been known, after three hours of his burning-bush language, to beg for more of that incandescent flame, fueled by a single passion—the conviction that there was no greater task on earth than to liberate the slaves, and punish their masters.

Lincoln positively jackknifed to his feet at the sight of Sumner, scattering his sons upon the flowered carpet. As the boys started to yell with indignation, Lincoln said, "John, you deliver the boys to their mother."

Hay grabbed Tad's hand and pulled him, squeaking, to his feet, while Willie ran into his mother's bedroom, shouting, "Mamma!"

Gracefully, Seward introduced Senator Sumner to the President-elect. Charles Sumner was not only remarkably handsome but, unlike most modern statesmen, he was clean-shaven. Hay had already sent out a curiously uninteresting story on the wire service to the effect that Lincoln would be the first bearded President in American history. Face-hair was now respectable, or *de rigueur*, as Hay's French-speaking Providence, Rhode Island, muse, Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, would say. Since a brief engagement to Edgar Allan Poe, Mrs. Whitman had worn only white, like a shroud; she had also sprinkled herself with ether in order to suggest a terminal illness of the sort that had once ravished Poe; and entirely overwhelmed poetry-loving Brown undergraduates.

"I would've known you anywhere," said Lincoln. "From your pictures."

"I might *not* have known you, sir, with the beard of Abraham, you might say, so newly acquired." To Hay's ear Sumner sounded like so many of his fellow Boston Brahmins, more English than American. Even so, the voice was singularly beautiful in its way, thought Hay, the Westerner, as he slipped into the bedroom where, to his delight, he found Madam and a colored maid opening a row of trunks. As Willie entered the adjoining bedroom, she said, "Take Tad with you."

"No," said Tad.

"Yes!" said the Hellcat with a sudden change of expression that everyone,

including the remarkably spoiled Tad, understood and feared. Whimpering with self-pity the child obeyed. "Oh, God, will this never end?" Madam appealed to Hay. "I feel seasick from the cars. I hate these trunks."

"Well, you'll soon be settled in the White House. Can I help?"

Madam was holding up a dress of blue velvet; she examined it carefully for signs of damage. "I am a martyr to moths," she said to herself, but spoke aloud, a curious habit to which Hay had got used during their days of confinement aboard the cars. When Mrs. Lincoln wanted to—or was able to (he could never tell whether her erratic behavior was calculated or simply uncontrolled)—she could charm anyone on earth, as she must have charmed the most ambitious young lawyer in Springfield. Not that Lincoln would have needed much charming, for she was a Todd and lived with her sister, whose house on the hill was the center of the town's social life, and it was there that she had been courted by all the other ambitious lawyers, not to mention Judge Stephen Douglas; as a child in Lexington, Kentucky, she had known Henry Clay, the only American statesman, except for Parson Weems's Washington, that Lincoln had ever openly praised:

Madam gave the dress to the maid to hang up; turned to Hay with a sudden, almost girlish smile. "Between you and me, Mr. Hay, there is more to jest about in all of this than I might have suspected, for all the weariness as well."

"I've noticed that, too, Mrs. Lincoln."

But then the smile was gone. She had heard the sonorous voice in the next room. "Who is that with Mr. Lincoln?"

"Senator Sumner."

"Oh." Hay could see that she was torn between timidity and curiosity, which she resolved by going to the half-open door and looking into the parlor. "He's every bit as handsome as they say," she said in a low voice; this time to Hay and not to herself.

"He hasn't stopped talking since he arrived."

"At least he seems to have driven away Mr. Seward, that abolitionist sneak." Mary turned back into the room.

"Surely, Mr. Seward's no sneak—"

"Well, he was a rabid abolitionist once upon a time. Now, of course, he's gone and changed a few of his spots, but right or wrong, Mr. Sumner never changed. I do hope all these abolitionists never forget that Mr. Lincoln is *not* in favor of abolishing slavery. He simply does not want to extend it to the new territories. That is all; all!" In the past twelve days Hay had heard her say this so many times that he had ceased to hear the words. But then Mrs. Lincoln was in a difficult position. The Todds were a great slave-holding Kentucky family; worse, they were, many of them, secessionists, a source of much embarrassment to her, not to mention to the new President. "Find me Mrs. Ann Spriggs." This was unexpected.

"Who is that, Mrs. Lincoln?"

"She is a widow who has—or had—a boardinghouse on Capitol Hill. That's where we lived when Mr. Lincoln was in Congress. She's still alive, they say, and I'd dearly love to see her again and"—the girlish smile returned—"and show off!"

"For that," said Hay, again charmed by Madam, who had just taken over

The American Review

from the Hellcat, "I'll find her, Mrs. Lincoln."

With a wave, Madam dismissed him. She is going to be a very royal First Lady, he thought, as he returned to the parlor, hoping to escape the senatorial presence unremarked. But Hay's appearance stopped Sumner in mid-sentence. "Sir?"

"This is my secretary's secretary, Mr. Sumner. John Hay."

"Oh, yes." They shook hands. Hay felt a certain awe, seeing so famous a man up close. "I heard you speak, sir," he said. "Two years ago. In Providence, I was at Brown."

"I remember the speech." Sumner had lost interest. Hay looked at Lincoln: should he stay? The Tycoon raised his chin, which meant no. "I'm curious to see which is taller, Mr. Sumner or myself, but when I suggested that we measure back: . . ."

"I said"—Sumner was not about to allow anyone to say his lines for him—"the time has come to unite our fronts and not our backs before the enemies of our country."

"Yes, that's *just* what you said." Lincoln turned to Hay. "Word for word," he added. With a low bow, Hay left the two statesmen to what, he suspected, was going to be a most disagreeable session. Sumner had supported Lincoln in the election; but now Sumner feared Seward's ascendancy over the new President. Sumner wanted Lincoln to abolish slavery in the seceded states. But Lincoln was not about to do that, not with Virginia and Maryland on the verge of secession, and half a dozen border states, including Kentucky, ready to follow. On the train from Springfield, as Hay observed the large crowds that cheered the President-elect (everywhere except in New York City, where there was a powerful pro-secessionist movement), he came to think of Lincoln as a beleaguered fortress, with cannons firing at him from every direction; a fortress waiting to be relieved by. . . . But Hay did not know by what. No one knew what was in Lincoln's mind. Particularly not the boisterous young men crowded at the far end of Willard's bar, drinking cocktails at ten cents a glass.

Hay pushed through the swinging doors of the long bar just off the main parlor of the hotel, where ladies sat beneath a gilded dome, drinking tea and casting disapproving—when not envious—looks at the men as they entered and left the bibulous good fellowship of the smoky, long bar.

Hay found the smooth-faced Robert Lincoln—the boy could but would not grow whiskers—talking to a short, bright-eyed young man who was already beginning to go bald. Robert introduced Hay to the young man, saying, "He graduated from Harvard the same year you graduated from Brown."

"Well, that's a bond, I guess," said Hay, ordering a brandy smash.

The Harvard graduate was examining Hay curiously. "You're one of Mr. Lincoln's secretaries, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Everyone says Johnny's too young." Robert smiled shyly; but then he was shy; and a bit solemn. Two years earlier he had been uprooted by his father and sent east to enroll at Harvard. But since he had not been scholastically ready for that great university he had been obliged to spend a year in preparation at the Phillips Exeter Academy, in New Hampshire. It was said that Mr. Lincoln want-

ed, the best possible education for his oldest son just as he himself had had, the very worst, which is to say practically none at all. After the debate with Douglas and the lost election, Lincoln decided to travel east to see how his son was getting on at Exeter. It was on this trip—coincidentally, hardly any claimed—that Mr. Lincoln was prevailed upon to speak third in a series at New York's Cooper Institute. He did so on February 27, 1860. The liberal editor of the New York *Evening Post*, William Cullen Bryant, chaired the meeting while the city's most powerful editor, Horace Greeley, sat in the audience.

The next day Lincoln was known to the entire nation. With characteristic eloquence, he had accepted slavery in the South, but he had opposed its extension elsewhere. This pleased a majority of the Republicans while arousing great suspicion among Douglas's Northern Democrats, not to mention the Democrats of the South. After Lincoln's triumph at the Cooper Institute, he spoke elsewhere in the Northeast, and in the course of this triumphal passage he took the Republican nomination away from the powerful Seward as well as from that passionate anti-slavery man Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio. "So if it hadn't been for you, Bob," Lincoln liked to say, "being up there at Exeter, I'd never have been nominated or elected." Robert appeared to believe this. Hay did not. From the beginning of his close association with Lincoln—less than a year, but it seemed like a lifetime—he had been delightedly conscious of the Tycoon's endless cunning. There was nothing that Lincoln ever left to chance if he could help it. He was a master of guiding public opinion either directly, through a set speech to a living audience, or indirectly, through an uncanny sense of how to use the press to his own ends. He was also the first politician to understand the importance and the influence of photography; no photographer was ever sent away unsatisfied. He had even grown a beard in order to soften his somewhat harsh features; and to make himself, at least in appearance, the nation's true Father Abraham. It was thus with characteristic forethought that he had sent his son to New England to school so that with no other apparent end than ordinary paternal care, he might, when the time came, go east—and seize the crown.

The bald young man, who was Henry, the son of Charles Francis Adams, of Massachusetts, a Lincoln supporter, turned to Hay and said, "I saw our senator on his way upstairs. I assumed he was on his way to Mr. Lincoln."

Hay nodded. "I left them together. I think Mr. Sumner was about to make a speech."

Henry sighed. "He is like a madman nowadays...."

"Well, he was knocked on the head with a stick, wasn't he? By that crazy Southerner?" Robert started to order another drink, but Hay made a warning gesture; and Robert desisted. There were times when Hay had the sense that he had been hired not as a secretary to the President but as an elder brother to the boys.

"Oh, Mr. Sumner's recovered. Pretty much, anyway. But he seems to have conversed with God altogether too much during those three years that he was an invalid. When he came back to the Senate, he announced, 'I am in morals, not politics.'"

"That is chilling," said Hay.

"Much my own view," said Henry; and smiled for the first time. "I should

think that the two are probably antithetical. My father disagrees, of course. I'm his secretary, by the way. He's in the Congress, you know."

"I know. I know. Mr. Lincoln thinks very highly of Mr. Adams."

"That's right," said Robert. "Fact, he said maybe he was going to—"

"Rober!" Hay spoke warningly.

"All right, Johnny."

"Mr. Robert Lincoln. . ." Hay began.

"The Prince of Rails, as the press calls him. Oh, they'll enjoy *that* at Harvard," said Henry, whose smile, at best, was thin indeed.

"I'll never hear the end of it." Robert was glum. "At least they couldn't get me to make a speech on the back of the train. I don't know how Father does it."

Henry turned to Robert. "I know my father's being considered for minister to England. Personally, I'd rather he stayed here."

"And miss out on London?" Hay betrayed his own youthful interest. For Hay, London was literature—Dickens, Thackeray, and whoever wrote *Adam Bede*, and history. Washington was just old-shoe politics.

"I'd rather miss out on London than on Lincoln," said Henry.

"Why?" Hay was truly curious.

"Well, if he should fail, there will no longer be a country. And since my family believes that we invented the whole thing, I'd certainly like to see what becomes of the remains."

"I don't think he'll fail," said Hay, who thought that he would; as much as he prayed that somehow Lincoln might yet hold together what was now falling apart with such awful speed.

"In that case, if he succeeds, it will be even more interesting."

"How? It will be just as it was before."

"No, it won't. It can't be."

"What *will* it be?"

"No one knows. That's the excitement."

AT exactly nine o'clock that same evening, Salmon P. Chase, late governor of Ohio and senator-elect, stood outside Parlor Suite Six with the delegation from the Peace Conference. Chase had not seen Lincoln since shortly after the election, when the President-elect had summoned him to Springfield. Lincoln then beat a number of times about the bush before he offered Chase—or, perhaps did *not* offer Chase—a post in the Cabinet.

They were walking down the street that passed in front of Lincoln's comfortable mansion—so unlike, thought Chase sourly, the legendary log cabin of Lincoln's birth, which had been advertised from one end of the Union to the other. Lincoln was courteous but tentative; and Chase, who had never thought him strong, came away convinced that the President-to-be was dangerously weak. "I look for a balanced Cabinet, naturally," he said, automatically raising his tall hat to a passing lady. It was then that Chase noticed that Lincoln kept an elaborate file of papers *inside* the hat. At least the man was every bit as common as he presented himself; the mediocrity was honest. On the other hand, Chase was less certain about Lincoln's views. Essentially, he thought him an opportunist. Yet it was Lincoln who had prevailed at the convention and it was the gover-

nor of Ohio who was meekly following the tall man down the street. "Mr. Seward, who got the second most votes at the convention, is plainly the party's own choice for secretary of state."

"Has he accepted?"

"Yes." Lincoln did not elaborate. "You, sir, got the third most votes."

Chase stopped breathing with excitement: the offer of the Treasury was near at hand. But Lincoln veered off. "Then there was Bates, of Missouri, and Cameron, of Pennsylvania."

"Sir, Mr. Simon Cameron is corrupt."

"I have been told that." Lincoln sounded grim.

"Of course, he controls Pennsylvania." Chase had needled Lincoln.

"But I am Honest Abe," Lincoln replied, with what Chase took to be a weak smile. Then he changed the subject. "I want a Southerner in the Cabinet. A real Southerner. Preferably a Virginian. Seward is canvassing for me now."

"Any luck?"

Lincoln stopped then. He looked down at Chase—a stout, clean-shaven man with a nearly bald Roman bust of a head. "Sir, let me make you a curious proposal. I would like you to be Secretary of the Treasury, but I cannot offer you the post just yet."

Chase contained his indignation. He had had, thus far, a splendid career, and had he been more expedient and less moral, he, not Lincoln, would have been the Republican candidate. But if you cannot get cream, settle for milk, had always been his practical wisdom. But now Lincoln was suggesting that even the despised saucer of milk might not come his way. Since Chase did not betray his chagrin, the two men had parted on friendly terms. Fortunately, the complaisant Ohio legislature was more than willing to appoint Salmon P. Chase to the United States Senate, so at least he would hold some office in this disintegrating republic.

Now Chase stood at Lincoln's door as the delegates from the Peace Conference fell into place behind him. The Southerners were particularly keen to see the demon. As the clock in the lobby below struck nine, Nicolay opened the door, bowed to Chase, and motioned for the delegation to file into the parlor where Lincoln, quite alone, stood in front of the fireplace.

"Mr. Chase!" Lincoln's handclasp was warmer than his voice, thought Chase, unable to interpret the auguries in question. He had already heard that Cameron was to have not the Treasury but the War Department; and Lincoln was supposed to be having second thoughts about that. The Treasury—after the presidency—was what Chase most wanted. Bates, of Missouri, was not suitable; and no Southerner would serve. The Maryland Blairs, mad father and two mad sons, were also at work trying to capture Lincoln, but though Chase was convinced that Lincoln was weak, he was equally convinced that he was extremely wily. Chase had not yet heard any particulars of the Albany Plan. If he had, he would have been in despair. Chase truly feared Seward and his mentor Thurlow Weed.

Chase handed Lincoln a letter from the head of the Peace Conference, former President Tyler. "He sends his compliments, sir. He hopes to call on you at another time."

"I shall call on *him*, of course." Lincoln's courtesy was perfunctory. He turn-

ed to the semicircle of delegates, who stared at him as if he were some sort of rare beast. "Gentlemen, I know some of you personally from the past. I know all of you by name and repute. I am glad that this conference continues, and I will do what I can to give assurance and reassurance to the Southern states that we mean them no harm. It is true that I was elected to prevent the extension of slavery to the new territories of the Union. But what is now the *status quo* in the Southern states is beyond my power—or desire—ever to alter."

Although it had been plain to Chase that Lincoln was not the man to lead any sort of crusade against slavery, Lincoln aided by a powerful Cabinet... As Seward dreamed that he would be Lincoln's prime minister, Chase saw himself as chancellor, on the order, say, of the Austrian Metternich.

A Southern congressman challenged Lincoln. "Will you uphold the laws, where previous Presidents did not? Will you suppress the likes of Mr. John Brown and the Reverend Garrison who preach war against us and our property?"

"Well, we hanged Mr. Brown, and we put Garrison in prison," Lincoln was mild. "That strikes me as a reasonable amount of suppression."

"But the laws of property..." the voice continued.

Chase shut his eyes; he could not wait for his daughter Kate to arrive tomorrow evening. Thrice a widower at fifty-three, Salmon P. Chase's whole life was now his twenty-year-old daughter; a thirteen-year-old daughter, Nettie, had not yet had the time to lay any great claim to his powerful paternal affections. But the beautiful and gifted Kate had acted as his hostess when he was governor of Ohio, and she would do the same in Washington. To please Kate, he had just rented a large, expensive town house even though he was, as always, in debt. Like his friend Sumner, Chase dealt not in politics but in morals. But morals paid poorly. Chase could not remember a time when he had not been as anxious about money as he had been serene about moral issues.

Lincoln's voice suddenly recalled Chase from his reverie. The President-elect was answering one of the Southerners. "Look, there is only one difference between us. You think slavery is right and ought to be extended. We think it is wrong and ought to be restricted. For this, neither has any just cause to be angry with the other."

If that was not sufficient honey for the bearish South, what was? wondered Chase.

"Then explain, sir," ordered another Southern voice, "why it is that since your election, six states—"

"Seven!" from a dozen voices.

"—seven states, counting Texas, officially, today, have left the Union."

"That's more for them to explain to me than for me to explain to them." Lincoln was surprisingly cool under the circumstances. But then he was supposed to be a practice lawyer. Curious, thought Chase, how little anyone really knew about this new President.

"But I should like to remind you that *before* my election to the presidency, the governor of South Carolina announced that that state would secede if I were elected. And so they did. And others have followed, as you remind me. Currently, those elements in rebellion against the federal government"—Chase liked the

use of the word "elements" instead of "states"; the distinction was sufficiently nice to make it possible for second thoughts all round, not that there would be any—"have seized, *stolen*, to use the precise word. . . ." Lincoln looked in Chase's direction. For an eerie instant, Chase wondered if his mind was being looked into and read. But the look was casual. Whenever Lincoln spoke, he was always careful to look at every part of his audience. First the dreamy gray eyes would glance to one side; and then, as if he had discovered someone of interest to him, the whole head would slowly turn and follow his gaze. ". . . stolen, I repeat, three revenue cutters, four customs houses, three mints, six arsenals and their contents, and one entire naval yard. All of these are property of the whole people of the United States and not of any single element of the population."

Voices were raised. Would the federal government consider selling the "stolen" property? Lincoln thought it a better idea to return what had been stolen; and to forget the whole thing. He is leaving them every possible escape route, thought Chase, who inclined to the divine view that evil must be punished. An eye for an eye was his religion.

When asked about Fort Sumter, at the entrance of Charleston Harbor, Lincoln commended the courage of its commander, Major Anderson. No, he had prepared no instructions for the Major because "I have not yet taken the oath of office. I will say how . . . impressed I was last month, as was everyone, when General Scott sent a merchant steamer with reinforcements for Fort Sumter, and the governor of South Carolina was able to turn back that ship."

Would Lincoln try to reinforce Fort Sumter? He would not answer. Meanwhile, he took seriously Virginia's effort to make peace between the regions of the country. He was in communication with the pro-Union elements in both Virginia and Maryland, whose governor was a Union man. No, he had not read the speech that Jefferson Davis had delivered when he became President of the Confederate States of America, five days ago. "But I just read a newspaper account of my old friend and colleague in Congress, Mr. Alexander Stephens, of Georgia."

"You mean *Vice-President* Stephens?" asked a challenging voice.

Lincoln affected not to hear. "Mr. Stephens admitted that Thomas Jefferson, a founder of the Union, thought that the principle of slavery was wrong. But Mr. Stephens said that the elements that he adheres to have come to the conclusion that the exact opposite is true, that the correct principle is that since the black man is inferior to the white man, he must be the white man's slave. I mean no disrespect to my old friend when I say that between his brand-new and to me highly peculiar principle and the old-fashioned principle of Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, I must support my predecessor in the office of President of the *United States*."

Which way will he go? wondered Chase, as the delegates filed past the tall man, who had a word of a personal nature for each. To Chase, he said, "I look forward to a continuation of our Springfield conversation."

Several imprudent answers occurred, as always, to Chase, and, as always, were replaced with that habitual prudence for which he was never entirely not admired. "So do I, sir. The Virginians—" Chase lowered his voice, as several were nearby, and Lincoln lowered his head, the better to hear him. Chase noticed

that Lincoln's thick, coarse hair was as black as an Indian's, with no sign of gray. "They will stay in the Union if you let Fort Sumter alone."

"One state for one fort?" Lincoln smiled. "I think that's a pretty good deal for the fort owner."

"Yes, sir." Chase moved on. He had got the answer that he had feared; but expected. Lincoln would give in to the South, after a certain amount of calculated bluster.

Mary was awake in bed when Lincoln joined her. The last of the peace delegation had gone, as he put it to her, "in a state of belligerency."

"Come to bed. You look so tired."

"You must be tired, Molly." Lincoln began to undress.

"I thought I was. Then I got into bed, and tried to sleep, and couldn't. Too tired to sleep. Too excited, I guess."

Lincoln turned off the gaslight overhead. The lamp beside the four-poster bed cast a blue-and-white glare across Mary's face.

"What did you think of the Old Club House?" asked Lincoln, pulling on a nightshirt that was too short for him; but then all store-bought nightshirts were too short for him. Mary wanted to have some made to order; or she herself would make them to order. But Lincoln was perfectly content to wander about with long legs bare—just like a stork, she'd say, in disapproval.

"The Old Club House? Oh, Governor Seward's Old Club House. An appropriate name."

"Well. It *was* a real clubhouse till recently." Lincoln stared at his beard in the glass; idly, he parted it.

"I know. That's where they brought poor Mr. Key to die, after he was shot. I could never trust that man, Never!"

"The late Mr. Key? Or his murderer, Mr. Sickles?" Lincoln removed the part from his beard.

"Governor Seward, Father. You know what I think of him."

"Well, I noticed you did quite well by his dinner."

"Oh, the food was splendid! I do have a sufficiency of flesh, don't I?" Sadly, Mary squeezed her right upper arm and watched, with sorrow, as the resulting bulge stretched taut the white lace of her nightdress.

"Well, you look in your sufficiency sufficiently beautiful to me."

"Oh, Father, you'd say that if I looked like... like General Scott."

"Of course, I would *say* that. But I would not mean it." Lincoln stepped into the adjoining bathroom where the commode was. Mary had remarked on the hotel's comfort and modernity. No chamber pot was necessary in any of the parlor suites. Would the White House be the same?

"Father," she called, "do I nag you about appointments?"

"Yes," came the voice from the bathroom.

"Oh, I don't! It's the vampire press that says I do because I'm Southern and supposed to believe in slavery when *I'm* the only abolitionist in the family and you are just—mild and meek."

Lincoln returned, drying his face with a towel decorated with the *W* of Willard's. "I suppose any man named Watson or Wilcox would feel justified in stealing one of these towels," he said.

"Or Washington. Did you give Governor Seward your speech to read?"

Lincoln nodded. "He said he'd make notes."

"Don't listen to him."

"I *listen* to everyone. I like him, all in all."

"He thinks he's so clever."

"Well, he has every right to think that. He *is* clever. Though not clever enough to get rid of Simon Cameron for me."

"I thought you'd decided to keep Cameron out of the Cabinet."

"I did. Then I was un-decided. Anyway, I kept him out of the Treasury." Lincoln got under the covers. "He'll be at the War Department."

"Then I suggest you avoid fighting a war."

"I mean to, Molly."

"Who'll be at the Treasury?"

"Salmon P. Chase."

"That crazed abolitionist! He wants to be President."

"They all do. That's why I'm putting the whole lot where I can see them. In the Cabinet." Lincoln sighed.

"I suppose you're right, Father. You usually are. Eventually, anyway. Oh, Cousin Lizzie is going to stay on for the first few weeks we're in the President's House. She's wonderful with upholsterers and all that sort of thing. They say the mansion has been let go to rack and ruin. Just like this country, I said, which I hope the vampire press does *not* pick up, true though it is. Mr. Buchanan has been a disaster, and thank God it's you who'll take his place and not Judge Douglas, brilliant as he is. Strange how I might have married him! You know, everyone thought I should. Even *I* thought I *should*, but then I met you at the dance at our house, and you came up to me and you said, by way of introduction, that you wanted to dance with me, 'in the worst way,' you said, your very words, and so you did dance with me, and I told everyone, it was truly in the worst way! Oh, Father!" Mary smiled at the memory, and turned to her husband, only to find him sound asleep on his back. From force of habit she touched his brow—she touched the brows of all those close to her, to detect signs of the fever that had killed her three-year-old Eddie; but Lincoln's face was cool to the touch. Suddenly, he took a deep breath and then, as he exhaled, he moaned.

"Poor man," she said to her sleeping husband; and wondered if his dreams were now as terrifying as hers had been, unknown to him, for so many years.

THE next morning, gripsack in hand, Governor Seward arrived at Willard's Hotel, fought his way through the crowded lobby and up crowded stairs and then down the crowded corridor to Parlor Suite Six, where Lamon admitted him to a room crowded with two small boys playing tag while Lincoln sat beside the window, glasses on his nose, reading the newspapers.

"I see your admirers are filling up the hotel." Seward gave Lincoln the gripsack.

"I had never realized how many men are eager to serve their country in high-paid positions that are within my gift." Lincoln took the gripsack, plainly relieved to have it once more in his hand.

"How do you deal with them?"

"My two secretaries, poor boys, are interviewing the lot. Everyone who wants an appointment from me goes to them in Parlor One and leaves his credentials. Speaking of credentials, what do you think of mine?" Lincoln tapped the gripsack. Willie tapped Tad on the head. Tad screamed. Lincoln turned to Lamon. "Take the boys to their mother." Despite loud cries of defiance, the huge Lamon carried both boys from the room.

"Well, sir, it is a finely argued case." Seward took his time lighting a cigar. He was still not certain that he understood either the speech or its author.

"It is no more than a legal case?" Lincoln showed an author's dejection, which amused Seward.

"Of course it is more. You have made the point, once and for all, that you were not elected President in order to abolish slavery in the South...."

"I cannot say that enough, can I? But the more I do say it, the more violent the Southerners become."

"They think, in time, we intend to do away with slavery, and so they mean to do away with us first—by leaving the Union."

"Which they cannot do. I am clear on that, am I not?"

Seward nodded; and removed from his tailcoat pocket the notes he had made on the inaugural address. "I take this passage to be the centerpiece of your... brief." Seward smiled; Lincoln did not. Seward read. "I hold, that in contemplation of universal law, and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper, ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination."

"Yes, that is at the heart of my 'brief.'"

"But the Southern states regard the organization of the Union as a more casual affair. As they entered it of their own free will, so they can leave it."

"But no provision was ever made in the Constitution for their leaving it."

"They say that this right is implicit."

"Nothing so astounding and fundamental would *not* be spelled out in the Constitution." Lincoln's voice grew slightly higher. Seward had read somewhere that when Lincoln made a speech his voice was like a tenor trumpet—a tenor trumpet of war, Seward thought, suddenly aware, for the first time, that war had become a possibility and that the traditional uses to which his sort of man was put—in particular, the tasks of conciliation and accommodation—would be of no avail. So many people had spoken for so long of the irrepressibility of conflict, to use his own phrase, that the fact that conflict might now be at hand made the cigar clenched between his teeth lose its savor. Worse, the whole matter might well be decided by the tall, thin figure sitting opposite him, profile silhouetted by winter light. At all costs, the Albany Plan must succeed.

Seward was beginning to get Lincoln's gauge; and he was afraid. He looked back down at his notes. "Your reasoning is good." Then he read, "If a minority... will secede rather than submit, they make a precedent which, in turn, will divide and ruin them; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority." That is plain."

"It is *all* so plain, Mr. Seward. That is the hard part. But I do my best to spell it out when I say, physically speaking, we cannot separate. It's not like a husband

and wife getting a divorce and dividing up the property."

Seward nodded; and read, "'Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain either, you cease fighting, the identical questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.' That says it all, I guess."

"But to say is not to do."

"To say what is true is to do a lot in politics." Seward laughed; for some reason, the mood of panic had gone. "Not that I've had much experience along those lines."

Lincoln, to his relief, laughed too. "Who has?"

"I am afraid of your ending," said Seward, coming to the point.

"Too harsh?"

Seward nodded, and read, "'In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you.' " Seward looked up. "Let them fire the first shot; if shots are to be fired? which I pray not." Seward continued to read, "'You can have no conflict without being yourself the aggressors. *You* have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while *I* shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend' it. With *you*, and not with *me*, is the solemn question of 'Shall it be peace, or the Sword?' " "

"That is the case. That is *my* case."

Seward inhaled the cigar smoke deeply, comfortably. "Never end a speech with a question."

Lincoln smiled. "For fear you'll get the wrong answer?"

Seward nodded, "People are perverse. I would cut all that I have just read. It is too menacing. I've written a paragraph to take its place. It's inside the case."

Lincoln opened the case and withdrew the speech, which he had had, in greatest secrecy, set up in type by a printer so that there would be exact copies for the wire services as opposed to the usual garbled reporters' or recorders' shorthand notes, or confusion over his own not always clear calligraphy. Lincoln read to himself Seward's flowery coda. He nodded. "I can use some of this. If you don't mind my turning it into my own words."

"It's yours, sir. You'll cut the other?"

"I can't cut the part about the oath that I have sworn to uphold the Constitution. That is what gives me—and the Union—our legitimacy in the eyes of heaven."

"I did not think of you as a religious man, Mr. Lincoln."

"I am not, in any usual sense. But I believe in fate—and necessity. I believe in this Union. That is *my* fate, I suppose. And my necessity."

"You are a man of sentiment," said Seward. "I had not known that." Seward rose. "Since there has always been a rumor that you were not a proper Christian and churchgoer—"

"Founded, I'm afraid, on my *impropriety* and chronic absence from church."

"I, as an important layman of the Episcopal Church, am going to take you over to St. John's, where the minister and congregation will be able to see that you are at peace with Our Lord Jesus Christ, and they will then spread the good news."

The American Review

Lincoln laughed; and got to his feet. Then he noticed the pile of newspapers beside his chair. He frowned. "Did you see *The New York Times*?"

On principle, Seward said that he had not, while doing his best to anticipate Lincoln's response. "Sir," Seward began, "there was no doubt about the plot in Baltimore. . . ."

"If there had been a plot, why was no attempt made on the cars that I was supposed to be in?"

"Because everyone in Baltimore knew by then that you had already gone through the city."

"No, I've made an error that I'll never live down. According to the *Times* I arrived in the city wearing a Scotsman's plaid hat and a cloak. What sort of idle malice invents such a thing?"

"It is the nature of newspapers. I suppose the writer wanted to make the cartoonist's job easier."

"He has. I'll be shown with that hat and cloak from one end of the country to the other. Such lies go out all the time," said Lincoln darkly, "on the telegraph."

"It is a hazard of our estate, sir. Will Mrs. Lincoln join us?"

"No, she's going off with her cousins to see the sights, which is ironic, since she is the churchgoer of the family."

"Then she need *not* go to St. John's, as her soul is saved."

So, together, Seward and Lincoln, guarded by the watchful Lamont, made their way across Lafayette Square, where David Herold stood in the crowd that had gathered—the minister had already spread the word that the President-elect would attend the morning service. David watched the tall man as he walked slowly by, lifting his hat to the people who greeted him. David thought that the old man looked surprisingly pleasant and friendly. In a way, it was a shame that he was going to be shot just before he took his oath of office, by two of the wild boys who, even now, were at target practice across the river in Alexandria, Virginia.

THE day of the inaugural, March 4, David Herold was awake at dawn. Since this was not a day to be missed, he had slept in all his clothes, including the disintegrating shoes. As he slept on a bunk in a sort of larder off the kitchen, there were no creaking stairs to worry about. He could hear throughout the house the heavy breathing and restive movements of seven women, all flesh of his flesh. He still longed for a brother to do things with, like . . . well, go to the Capitol and watch Old Abe get shot.

The morning was misty; and not cold. The frozen mud had melted, yielding the first crocuses and snowdrops of the season. At the Capitol, a few streets from David's house, there was no crowd as yet; nor any sign of one. But there were troops everywhere. Some were in regulation blue; others were in dark green, with sharpshooters' rifles. They appeared to be searching for . . . wild boys? wondered David, happy to be a mere onlooker.

No one tried to stop David as he walked right up to the small wooden platform that had been built on the Capitol's east steps. The platform had a roof to it, presumably in order to keep anyone from shooting Lincoln from high up.

Then David wandered over to the Capitol's north side, where, to his surprise, a pair of long wooden walls had been built between the plaza and the entrance to the Senate chamber. This meant that when Lincoln got out of his carriage, he would be shielded by two walls of planking as he made his way into the Capitol.

David still remembered the last inaugural vividly. He and the wild boys had a marvelous time, whooping it up, cheering the President, Old Buck, and the beautiful lady got up as the Goddess of Liberty, as she stood on a moving float just in front of Old Buck's carriage while back of him there was a second float on which had been placed an entire warship filled with sailors. But today there were no signs of splendor. There were few flags in evidence and none of the red, white, and blue bunting that was traditionally used to decorate the speaker's stand on Inaugural Day. On the other hand, he had never seen so many soldiers.

As David made his way up Pennsylvania Avenue to Fifteenth Street, the town was coming awake. The usual Negro population was being added to by the thousands of out-of-towners who had filled up the hotels. Early as it was, a crowd had gathered in front of Brown's Hotel, and, as always, Willard's was the center of much activity. David stared up at the windows of Lincoln's suite. The presidential parlor was right over the main door, and an American flag had been attached to the window.

"Hello, David!" David turned and saw the round, cherubic face of Scipione Grillo, a professional musician, who had just opened a restaurant next to one of the town's most popular theaters.

"Hey, Skippy!" This was Mr. Grillo's universal nickname. "What're you doing up so early?"

"I go to the Center Market. I go buy food. We have a full house for every meal today."

"What's at the theater?"

"I don't notice. But whatever's there, we got good audiences." Skippy maintained that he could always tell what a play was like by what its audience drank at his bar. For instance, they drank wine or champagne before and after a good comedy while good tragedy required champagne before and whiskey after. But if it was an opera, there was little or no drinking, because Americans know nothing of music, said Skippy; and that was why he was abandoning music for the food-and-drink business.

David knew every theater manager in the town. As a result, he could almost always get a seat in the gallery for nothing. If he brought Annie Surratt or some other girl, he was expected to pay for the one ticket. If he should have no money left after a performance at Ford's, Skippy would give him a free beer. In payment, David would do odd jobs for Skippy. He also worked for the various theater managements whenever an extra hand was needed to help load or unload scenery. He was besotted with the theater. In fact, had he been taller and his teeth less bucked, he would have been an actor; or, perhaps, a theater manager.

"You going to watch the inaugural parade, Skippy?"

"How can I? I make dinner. Anyway, there's only the two bands. If there was the three, I'd be there. But I play violin tonight at the Union Ball. Mr. Scala needs me, he said. Marine Band's weak in the string section, he says."

The American Review

"So you'll get to see the whole lot."

"All I look at is the sheet music, these new dances...!"

JOHN HAY was at work in Parlor Suite One with Nicolay. Two large crates lay open on the floor and Hay was transferring folders filled with applications, affidavits, supplications, yellowed newspaper cuttings, and fervent prayers from the room's wardrobe to the cases. "We have received, personally, nine hundred and twelve applications for jobs," said Hay, studying the last of the folders.

"It seems more like nine thousand." Nicolay still retained a slight German accent, which Hay enjoyed imitating. Nicolay sat at a table, making a report to the President on which applications seemed promising.

"How much longer does this go on?"

"Until we leave office."

"I had no idea," said Hay, who had indeed had none. "I thought a few people might show up and he'd give them a postmaster's job and that was that. But we're going to have to deal with all thirty million Americans before we're through."

"Less the twelve million or so Mr. Davis has to find jobs for." In the distance, there was a premonitory roll of drums.

"Did you know Mr. Seward was thick as thieves with Mr. Davis right up to a few weeks ago when he left town and the Union?"

Nicolay nodded. "The Tycoon wanted the two of them to talk as much as possible."

Hay frowned. "Do you think Mr. Seward's really serious about taking himself out of the Cabinet?" Hay had been present in Lincoln's parlor when the Albany Plan had been revealed. The New York delegation, echoing Seward, had insisted that Lincoln exclude Chase from the Cabinet, which should be made up entirely of Whigs, instead of the four Democrats and three Whigs that Lincoln had in mind. When Lincoln had reminded the New Yorkers that he, too, was a Whig, which evened things, they had still been intransigent. They warned the Tycoon that Seward would not serve with Chase, to which Lincoln replied that he would be sorry to give up his first Cabinet slate in favor of a second list that he had prepared; but if that was the case, then he would appoint that good Whig Mr. Dayton as secretary of state, while Mr. Seward could go as minister to London, a city that he had so recently taken by storm.

Alarmed, the New Yorkers withdrew, their Albany Plan a temporary failure.

Seward's rage when Lincoln's words were repeated to him resulted in a letter of withdrawal from the Cabinet. Lincoln had chosen not to accept Seward's defection, and had responded with a polite note, asking Seward to remain where he was. As Lincoln signed the letter, he said, half to himself, half to Hay, "I can't afford to let Seward take the first trick."

"Personally," said Nicolay, "I'd rather Seward stayed out. But..."

The door to the parlor opened, and the vast Lamon filled the doorway. "He wants to see you boys." Lamon lumbered out of view.

"What's Lamon going to be in the government?" asked Hay.

"Marshal of the District of Columbia, which means he can go on being a

boydguard."

"One of many, let's hope."

The city was filled with alarming reports. The President would be shot on his way to the Capitol. The President would be shot at the Capitol. The President would be kidnapped at the Inaugural Ball and taken across the Long Bridge to Virginia and held hostage. Of all the rumors, this one struck Hay as a possibility. It had also enlivened General Scott, who had placed two sharpshooters in every window that looked upon the eastern portico of the Capitol, as well as sharpshooters all up and down Pennsylvania Avenue, not to mention plainclothesmen everywhere.

Lincoln himself seemed indifferent. For the past few days he had been preoccupied with the Virginians, who were holding a convention at Richmond to determine whether or not to secede. More than once, Hay had heard Lincoln pleading with one Virginian after another. Currently, the remaining Southerners in the Congress were particularly exercised by something called the Force Bill, which would give the President the right to call out the militia and accept volunteers into the armed forces. Lincoln had agreed privately—and, Hay thought, cravenly—to reject the bill if that would satisfy Virginia. On Friday, acting on Lincoln's instructions, just before the Force Bill was to be voted on, Washburne had asked for an adjournment of the House. With this adjournment, the Thirty-Sixth Congress expired. But not before, as a further gesture to the Southerners, Lincoln's party supported a measure never, ever, to interfere with the institution of slavery in those states where slavery was legal. On that note of conciliation, the House of Representatives shut up shop on Monday, March 4, the day of Lincoln's inauguration. The Senate remained in session.

Nicolay and Hay proceeded down the police-lined corridor to Parlor Suite Six. Lincoln sat in his usual place beside the window, the light behind him, his glasses on his nose. Mrs. Lincoln, the three sons, the half-dozen female relations of Mrs. Lincoln's, quite filled the room.

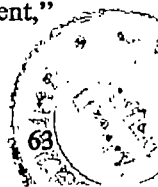
Hay had never seen Mr. Lincoln so well turned out. He wore a new black suit that still fit him. But Hay knew that by the time that restless, angular body had finished pushing and prodding with knees and elbows, the suit would resemble all his others. For the present, the white of the shirtfront shone like snow, while beside his chair, next to the all-important gripsack, was a new cane with a large gold knob. Hay could see that Mrs. Lincoln's expensive taste had prevailed.

"Gentlemen," Lincoln greeted his secretaries formally. "We are about to be joined by the marshal-in-chief, who will put us in our carriages, show us our seats, give us our orders. . . ." There was a sound of cheering outside the window. Then a fanfare of trumpets. Lincoln got to his feet and peered out. "Well, if it's not the President himself, I'd say it's a very good likeness."

Mary had rushed to the window. "It's Mr. Buchanan! He's come to fetch you."

"In a sense," Lincoln smiled. "Now, I shall want a lot of Illinois and"—he nodded to certain of Mrs. Todd's relatives—"Kentucky dignity."

With that, the marshal-in-chief appeared in the doorway. For a moment, Hay feared that Lamon would not let him through. "Mr. Lincoln, the President," proclaimed the marshal.



The aged Buchanan, as white of face as of hair, came forward to the center of the room. Lincoln crossed to him. They shook hands warmly. "I am here, sir," said the President, "to escort you to the Capitol."

"I am grateful, Mr. President, for your courtesy."

The two men left the room together. At the door Buchanan gestured for Lincoln to go first; but Lincoln stepped to one side, and the still-reigning President went through the door.

The marshal-in-chief explained who was to go in what carriage. There would be individual marshals—each with a blue scarf and white rosette—assigned to Mrs. Lincoln, to the sons, and to the ladies. Fortunately, Hay and Nicolay were allowed to follow Buchanan and Lincoln down the stairs to the lobby, where the police were holding back a considerable crowd. There was cheering at the sight of Lincoln. "Our applicants!" said Hay to Nicolay.

"Wait till we get outside," said Nicolay ominously.

Buchanan and Lincoln, now arm in arm, stood in the hotel's doorway. A sudden storm of cheering—and of booing—was promptly drowned out by Major Scala's Marine Band, which struck up "Hail to the Chief" as President and President-elect proceeded to get into their open carriage. A nervous marshal then hustled Hay and Nicolay into a barouche, already filled with Washburne and Lamon.

Hay found Washburne edgy; and Lamon uncharacteristically relaxed. But then Lamon had turned his friend and charge over to the United States Army, and if they could not protect him today, no one could. Washburne stared out of the window at the thin crowd along the brick sidewalk on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue. There was no sidewalk nor much of anything else on the south side, which, after a few blocks of houses and the Gothic red-brick Smithsonian Institution, turned into a marshland, the result of overflow from the canal that ended in the muddy waters of the Potomac River, on whose banks poison ivy and oak grew in wreaths like sinister laurel.

"That is a dangerous crowd," Washburne stared out the window. They were now abreast the Kirkwood House. Thus far, there had been neither cheers nor boos for the two Presidents up ahead.

"They're all secesh in this town," said Lamon, whose pronounced Virginia accent sounded somewhat incongruous to Hay.

"And spoiling for a fight," said Washburne.

"Watch the cavalry up ahead," Lamon pointed to the two rows of horsemen that flanked the presidential carriage. The men rode in such close order that anyone standing on the sidewalk would be unable to get more than a glimpse of the occupants of the carriage.

"Notice how the horses are sort of skittish?" Lamon gave a satisfied smile. "That was my idea. When you get your horses pulling this way and that, it's going to be mighty hard for anyone with a gun to get himself a proper sight."

David Herold had exactly the same thought. With Annie on his arm, he stood in front of Woodward's and watched the strangely silent parade. "You can't see either of them," he complained.

"Well, we'll get to see them both pretty clear when they come out on the Capitol steps."

"And when they do . . ." David began; but Annie pinched his arm, for silence.

There was only one float, drawn by four white horses; it represented the Republican Association. On top of the float, girls dressed in white represented each of the states of the Union that was no longer. The girls themselves were roundly cheered from the sidewalk; the Union was not.

David and Annie walked beside the float until they came to the plaza in front of the Capitol. Since noon, close to ten thousand people had been gathering. Boys sat in trees. A photographer had built himself a wooden platform where he was busily trying to get his camera in place while fighting off the boys and men who wanted to share the view with him.

Shoving and pushing, David and Annie were soon within a few yards of the speakers' platform, where a single row of troops held back the crowd. Above the platform, on the steps, the great folk of Washington were being led to their seats by ushers. David stared with awe at the foreign diplomats in uniforms that seemed made of pure gold or silver, while the ladies were resplendent in furs and velvet cloaks. The day had started to turn cold.

"My God," whispered Annie, "have you ever seen so many soldiers!" Soldiers were indeed everywhere; and under the eye of the Commanding General himself, who sat in huge, solitary splendor in his carriage on a nearby eminence. Winfield Scott had sworn a mighty oath that this President would take office, no matter what.

There was cheering from the north portico, which they could not see from where they were standing. "They're going inside the Senate now."

"I know," said Annie. "I read the same paper. Did you take the job with Mr. Thompson?"

"Yes."

"I'm glad."

"Why?"

"Everyone should work."

"You don't."

"I'm still at the seminary. But I'm going to be a music teacher when I graduate and then . . . oh, look! The Zouaves!"

In fire-red uniforms, a company of soldiers under the command of their uncommonly beautiful drillmaster, the curly-haired, twenty-three-year-old Elmer E. Ellsworth, a pet of the Lincoln family, began to divert the crowd with an intricate and somewhat eccentric close-order drill. David was ravished at the sight; and filled with a profound envy. Why wasn't he wearing that extraordinary uniform? And doing those extraordinary tricks? And making Annie and every girl in the crowd gasp with admiration while impressing even the wild boys who were scattered throughout the crowd, ready, as always, for violence, preferably impromptu.

Inside the Senate Chamber, John Hay had not the slightest envy of Hannibal Hamlin, the newly sworn-in Vice-President of the United States. On the other hand, from his seat in the crowded gallery, he quite liked the look of the Senate Chamber. They might never get a proper dome on the Capitol, but Congress had seen to it that the Senate and the House of Representatives were splendidly

The American Review

housed in chambers of marble, decorated in red and gold and bronze, to set off the solemn statesmen in their rusty black, each with his own armchair and desk, snuffbox and shining spittoon.

Hannibal Hamlin spoke well and to the point, and for a moment Hay actually looked and listened to the new Vice-President, who was so dark-complexioned that his predecessor sitting beside him on the high dais, John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky, had been quoted as having said it was highly suitable that a radical government such as that of Mr. Lincoln should have for its Vice-President a mulatto. But mulatto or not, Hamlin was a former Democratic senator from Maine, who had helped found the Republican Party. Before the election, Lincoln and his running mate Hamlin had never met. Hay was constantly surprised to learn how little these Northern men of state knew one another, as opposed to the Southerners, who seemed all to have been brought up in the same crib.

After the election, Lincoln had invited his Vice-President-to-be to Chicago. They got on well, confounding the old Washington saw: There goes the Vice-President, with nothing on his mind but the President's health. Hamlin had introduced Lincoln to raw oysters; and Lincoln had said, "Well, I suppose I must deal with these, too." The two men had got on so well that Lincoln had told Hamlin that as he intended to place only one New Englander in the Cabinet, Hamlin could make the choice, which turned out to be a Connecticut newspaper editor named Gideon Welles. Somewhat reluctantly, Lincoln made him secretary of the Navy.

Hay looked up at the presidential party. Buchanan and Lincoln were seated side by side in the center of the gallery. Lincoln was as dark as Buchanan was white. For all the talk of *Old Abe*, most people who met Lincoln were startled to find that, at fifty-two, he had not a gray hair in his black shock, which was, for the moment, contained by the barber's art and Mary Todd's firm brushwork. But once out of public view, the long fingers would start to stray through that haystack, and in no time at all, three cowlicks in opposition would make his head look like an Indian warbonnet.

Lincoln seemed distracted, thinking no doubt of his speech—which had been sent, secretly, to old Mr. Francis Blair, at Silver Spring, read and admired, and sent back. How close was Lincoln to Mr. Blair? How close was he to anyone? Hay was still as new to Lincoln's relations with others as, presumably, they were. But Hay did wonder how on earth Lincoln would meet the present crisis, living in a Southern city, with a government that was more than half Southern and a Cabinet filled with rivals. Plainly, Lincoln was equally bemused. There were times when he would simply drift off in the middle of a conversation, while the curiously heavy-lidded left eye, always the indicator of his mood, would half shut, and he would no longer be present. But the eye was alert today, as far as Hay could tell from his end of the chamber, where the smell of men's cologne and ladies' perfume could not quite mask the stale odors of bodies imperfectly bathed. Hay's nose was sharp, his standards of hygiene high.

Hamlin was finished at last. He shook hands with the somber Breckinridge. Then the two Presidents rose, as the marshal-in-chief came to escort them to the east portico.

Hay followed the black-robed justices of the Supreme Court onto the Capitol

steps; he breathed the fresh air, gratefully. A sharp wind had started up, and Hay was suddenly terrified that Lincoln's speech would be blown from his hands. If it were, could the Tycoon remember it? No. The speech was so closely argued that if one word should be misplaced, a half-dozen more states would secede.

A justice's robe flapping in his face, Hay walked down the steps of the Capitol. Half the notables were already seated. The other half had packed the Senate Chamber. Members of the Congress, Supreme Court, Cabinet-to-be, as well as chiefs of foreign missions and high-ranking army and naval officers, each with family, assembled to participate in history. Hay took his seat next to Nicolay, just above the platform.

Nicolay pointed to the crowd. "Mr. Lincoln drew twice as many people as this just in Albany."

"Well, New York State voted for him," said Hay, "and these people didn't. There must be . . . what? ten thousand out there?"

"See the rifles?" Nicolay pointed to a boardinghouse across the Capitol plaza. Each window contained a man with a rifle.

"All trained on us," said Hay. He had always found the idea of assassination more exciting than not. But now he realized with a chill that had nothing to do with the March wind that he was seated just a row above the speakers' platform, with a thousand military rifles all aimed in his direction, not to mention who knew how many plug-uglies with hidden pistols and derringers and knives, ready to commit slaughter. He pulled his hat over his eyes, as if for protection.

The appearance of Lincoln and Buchanan had been greeted with unenthusiastic applause. Neither David nor Annie had so much as clapped a hand when the tall, dark-haired man took his seat behind a low table. David did notice how awkwardly Lincoln handled himself. He was no actor, David thought, scornfully, as he watched Lincoln take off his hat and then hold it in the same hand as the cane, to which he was plainly unused, while, with the other hand, he removed his speech from an inside pocket and then was obliged to transfer the speech to the hand that held both hat and cane. Crazy and old as Edwin Forrest was, he could certainly give Lincoln lessons in how to move, thought David; and how to die.

David looked at the men in the trees but could not find a familiar face. Surely the National Volunteers had not given up. He would have bet his last penny, which was in his pocket, that they would make their attempt. At the moment he felt the same excitement that he did in the theater when the musical overture, dominated by drums, began.

When all the dignitaries were in place, a distinguished-looking old man rose and came down to the front of the platform; and in a voice that David approved of, full of baritone drama, and even better, with arms outstretched like Edwin Forrest's when between the acts of whatever play he did nowadays, he would come out and, to the audience's delight, with wondrous fury attack his wife, the old man proclaimed, "Fellow citizens, I introduce to you, Abraham Lincoln, the President-elect of the United States!" Even David felt like applauding the old man, whoever he was. Meanwhile, Lincoln was having trouble with hat, cane, speech. He stood a moment, trying to manipulate the three, until a short, stocky man David recognized as Stephen Douglas, the defeated Democratic candidate, leaned forward and took the hat from Lincoln, who gave him a grateful smile.

The American Review

Lincoln then placed the cane on the table, put on his spectacles, moved to stage right of the table, which looked like a milking stool next to such a tall man, and began to read.

"Look," whispered Annie, "his hands are shaking."

"Wouldn't yours?"

Annie elbowed David in the ribs.

Hay was suffering stage fright for the Tycoon, who had never before sounded so tentative, even quavery of voice. Nevertheless, Hay knew that the high voice could be heard from one end of the plaza to the other. Lincoln was used to vast crowds in the open air. "Fellow citizens of the United States." The high voice was tremulous. "In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take, in your presence, the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States. . . ." Hay was relieved that at the mention of the Constitution Lincoln's voice lost its quaver. He was now moving onto his own formidable high ground, as he made the case for the Union.

Back among the senators, Salmon P. Chase could not help but contrast how different his own speech on this day might have been. For one thing, he would *never* have read out that provision in the Constitution that slaves be returned to their lawful masters. Chase shuddered as Lincoln elaborated. "It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the law-giver is the law."

"Shameful," Chase muttered to Sumner, who sat very straight behind him. Sumner nodded, listening closely.

"All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution—to this provision as much as to any other."

Sumner turned to Chase. "What he is doing is giving up the slaves in order to restore the Union."

"That is immoral."

"It is worse," said Sumner. "It is *impossible*."

For Mary the speech was the finest that she had ever heard; and she had heard Henry Clay and Judge Douglas; had heard her own husband proclaim that a house divided against itself cannot stand, losing thereby a Senate seat to Douglas while gaining the presidency for himself. She was also pleased that the new suit fitted him so well; and she was looking forward to showing off her own new wardrobe to the ladies of Washington who had, thus far, refused to call on her because, she had read in the press, they disdained her as some uncouth Westerner, unused to Washington's aristocratic ways. She, Mary Todd, of the great Kentucky Todd family, first lady of Springfield even before she was married, an invitation to whose mansion was the dream of every Illinois lady, if only to observe Mary preside over her witty and elegant court, known, far and wide, as the Coterie. Uncouth!

There was the sharp cracking sound of a gun being fired. Mary gasped. Lincoln stopped in his speech. All Mary could think was—has he been hit? But Lincoln was still standing, if mute. There was a murmur through the crowd. Hay craned forward to see if Lincoln was all right. Apparently, he was; but his face had gone chalk white.

David stood on tiptoe and looked off to the left, where the shot had come

from. "Who did it?" whispered Annie. "Can you see?"

"Soldiers, I think." David watched as six soldiers converged on a tree. Then a soldier held up a thick branch. A dazed-looking man was brushing himself off. There was laughter.

"A branch broke off," said David sadly, "under some fellow's weight." Annie was equally disappointed.

Lincoln resumed his speech. As he came to the coda, Seward leaned forward, eager to hear what Lincoln had cut from his own speech and what of Seward's paragraph he had used.

"You can have no conflict, without yourselves being the aggressors. *You* have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government..." Seward frowned: this was hard, too hard. "...while *I* shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect and defend' it."

Seward waited for the challenge "With *you*, and not with *me*, is the solemn question, "Shall it be peace, or the Sword?" To his great relief, Lincoln had cut this most dangerous question, and in its place came Seward's text, ruthlessly pruned of its richer blossoms. "I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords..."

Seward, eyes shut, chanted softly his own original phrase: "The majestic chords which, proceeding from so many battlefields and so many patriotic graves, pass through all the hearts and all the hearts..." Tears came to Seward's eyes whenever he declaimed this particular passage, first tried out many years ago at Utica. But Lincoln had changed the language. With some irritability, Seward heard the trumpet voice intone the new "...mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they *will* be, by the better angels of our nature."

Lincoln stopped; took off his glasses; put the speech into his pocket. As Seward applauded politely, he could not help but think how odd it was that some men have a natural gift for elevated language while others have none at all. Lincoln had made a perfect hash of Seward's most splendid peroration. Since any one of Seward's speeches was apt to sell nearly one million copies, he had, suddenly, the sense of being jilted—worse, of being a great beauty abandoned at the altar by a plain and unworthy man. But Seward would prevail in time. The Albany Plan may have misfired, but since the principle of it was still very much in his mind, he had taken back his letter of withdrawal. He would be secretary of state; and prime minister yet.

Chase turned to Sumner. "What does he mean?"

Sumner was bemused. "He will take the South back—slaves and all. Anything, to preserve the Union."

"Thank God, they will not come."

"Thank God, they will not come, without a bloody war."

The speech was well enough received by the crowd in the plaza. Lincoln had now recovered his color, Hay noticed. The new President stood beside the small table waiting for the ancient Chief Justice to give him the oath of office.

At the age of eighty-three, Roger B. Taney was several years older than the

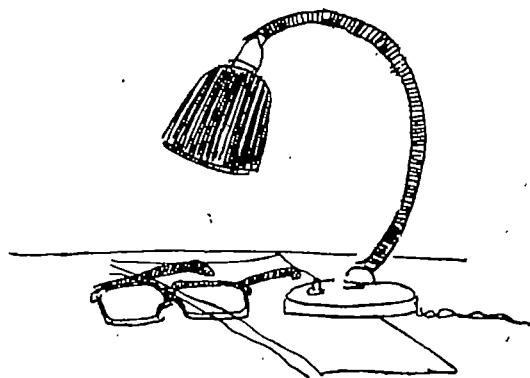
Constitution, whose interpreter he had been for a quarter century, as the fifth Chief Justice of the United States. Seward was peculiarly aware of the irony of the present situation. Had the fragile, withered Chief Justice not said, in the course of a decision to return a slave to his master, that Congress had no right to ban slavery from any territory, Abraham Lincoln would not now be President. Lincoln looked down, gravely, at the little man, who did not look up at him but looked only at the Bible in his right hand. In an inaudible voice, Taney administered the oath. Then Lincoln, hand on the Bible, turned from the Chief Justice to the crowd assembled and, ignoring the slip of paper on which his response had been printed, declared in a voice that made even Chase's cold blood turn warm, "I, Abraham Lincoln, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and I will, to the best of my ability. . ."

Lincoln turned full face to the crowd in the windswept plaza; and the famous war trumpet of a voice, until now muted, sounded its declaration and what was meant to be its justification for all time, "...preserve, protect and...*defend* the Constitution of the United States!"

On the word "defend," as if by prearrangement, the first battery of artillery began to fire; then the second; then all guns fired their salute to the new President, who remained at attention throughout the bombardment.

"My God," said Hay to Nicolay, "it is going to be war!"

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Henry James and the Dream of Fiction

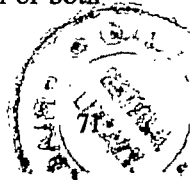
By DARSHAN SINGH MAINI

"Few novelists in the world have been at once the object of so much adoration and derision as Henry James." So says the author in the opening line of this lucid essay. He goes on to write "... it's necessary to remember that James is a 'minority' writer not by choice or election, but by temperament and necessity." Darshan Singh Maini was formerly Professor of English at Punjabi University.

FEW novelists in the world have been the object of so much adoration and derision as Henry James. If some critics and readers have tended to see him as the high priest of fiction whose tireless insight into the processes of fabulation on the one hand, and into the deepest recesses of the human psyche, on the other, makes him the *ultimate* novelist, other critics and fellow-novelists have turned away from him in dismay, disgust and despair. There is, indeed, something so unique about the cut and quality of his imagination, and about the operative energies of his vision and craft as to lead the acolyte into the inner sanctum of art, and the mocker into a rash of bewildered comment. And in this ambiguity, oddly enough, lies both James's appeal and fate as a novelist.

To be sure, James's genius, though recognized and saluted by his compeers such as Howells, Stevenson, Conrad, Ford Madox Ford and Edith Wharton, and later by such compatriots as T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, remained, on the whole, unrewarded during his life. The torment of neglect and "failure" to which he refers playfully in his letters, and which informs the *donnee* of his *Stories of Writers & Artists* to an extent, could not but compel him to raise a whole questionable aesthetic in self-defense. But if an injured psyche is to be blamed for certain excesses and wantonnesses, there's something to be said in behalf of an imagination whose range is almost Shakespearian in reach and insight, in expression and ambience. For ultimately, the appeal of James lies in his poetic powers to orchestrate the music of thought and sentiment, of place and person, of cultures and countries.

In a letter to Howells on the occasion of his 75th birthday, James wrote: "Your really beautiful time will come." To Howells, it did not come, but to James himself it came so resoundingly a generation after his death that the tide which swept the American campuses in particular is just beginning to spend itself. If the swing toward *Jamesolatry* is an indication of how a ravenous and imperious imagination may exact tribute as of necessity, it also shows the elitist character of the James revival. Which brings me then to the essential nature of his appeal. The modernity of James is eventually a question of both personal and fictive aesthetic.



The American Review

To begin with, it's necessary to remember that James is a "minority" writer not by choice or election, but by temperament and necessity. He could have as much produced a "bestseller" as a Kantian *Critique of Pure Reason* or a Hegelian *Phenomenology* or a Marxian *Capital*. He could not simply write *below* a certain level of competence and expectation. No wonder, one of his alter-egos, Philip Vincent, "the rarest of the novelists," recognized by "a higher criticism" in the evening of his life in the story called "The Real Thing," or another Jamesian novelist, Ray Limbert in "The Next Time" remain voices in the wilderness. As the narrator of the latter tale ruefully remarks, "You can't make a sow's ear of a silk purse! It's grievous indeed, if you like—there are people who can't be vulgar for trying." In fact, the tragedy of refinement in a world of compulsive compromises is a recurring theme in James's fiction. It appears to me, then, James's appeal is to a certain kind of reader who, to use a Jamesian expression, can meet the requirements of his imagination, and rise to the bait. Undoubtedly, his novels from *Roderick Hudson* (1875) to *The Ivory Tower* (1917) constitute some of the greatest enterprises of the imagination as it encounters the pressures of reality, culture and civilization. Such a reader feels drawn to the orchids of the imagination for he has often raised such exotic flowers in the nursery of his mind. The appeal, of course, is strongest where he has, like the novelist himself, a feminine sensibility grown rich in psychic and spiritual life. James is, in short a period wine like Proust, and yields his full flavor only in slow, measured and protracted draughts.

James's criticism has loosely divided his "imperium of letters," to use Leon Edel's felicitous phrase, into three phases—the romantic (*Roderick Hudson*, *The American*, *Daisy Miller*, etc.), the realistic/naturalistic (*The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Bostonians*, *The Princess Casamassima*, *The Tragic Muse*) and the existential/metaphysical (*The Ambassadors*, *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Golden Bowl*)—a Shakespearian progression of sorts. Philip Guedalla's famous quip about the novelist, "James I, James II and the Old Pretender," appears to have been based on such conventional suppositions. But the fact of the matter is that it's complex story of adjustments and accommodations both in terms of perceptions and architectonics, so that in the end it may be affirmed that James effects a poetic symbiosis of the reality of romance and the romance of reality. Of course, the Jamesian hand loses none of its cunning in the process, and, if anything, the imagination becomes more and more coercive, gorgeous and awesome, the technique more and more subtle and involved.

The great themes of James's fiction, which includes some of the world's most teasing novels, *nouvelles* and tales such as *What Maisie Knew*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Sacred Fount*, etc., may easily be summed up as the clash of cultures, the nature of evil, the ambiguity of truth, the discovery of the self, the life of the mind and the imagination, the imponderables of life and the *nirvana* of art, though all such themes are finally subsumed in the grand, overtopping theme of the dialectics of experience. In novel after novel, and tale after tale, we see how *consciousnesses* turn into *consciences* through the exertions of the human spirit, affirming the beauty, richness and holiness of human experience in all its conditions and contingencies, its whimsies and fancies, its dreams and distempers. Consciences, we find, are not, as a rule, had as a gift; they

are earned in labor and in ordeal. It's for this reason that Conrad called James "a historian of fine consciences." There is a Keatsian quality about the canonization of experience in James, though there is something to be said for the view that the experience for him, at times, amounted to a purely cerebral exercise.

In thus realising the poetries of the spirit, James sets up, besides a complex aesthetic, an evolved ethics of relationships. It's because of this great moral lyricism that F.R. Leavis and Lionel Trilling give him a central position in the history of the Anglo-American novel. In their view, only an insightful concern with the moral health of the individual and the community, and the concreteness and richness of the rendered continuities within which moral natures operate and seek hospitality could constitute the distinctive mark of great art. It's this concern in James which swinging between the sunlit and serene moral realism of a Turgenev and the stern, Calvinistic ethics of a George Eliot gives his fiction a rare moral vigor. Of course, this New England Puritanism is seldom permitted to assume a grim or menacing aspect. Both moral rigidity and moral hysteria, as also moral chaos, are viewed with disfavor from the start. A morality of fire and brimstone and an ethic of convenience are equally reprehensible. Even chilly, masochistic sacrifices are not looked upon with a glad eye. In short, James has little sympathy for absolutist ethics. Thus, despite his overarching irony, it's, I think, possible to sift the sum of his views and values. And these include good faith, fidelity, compassion, understanding, sacrifice and integrity. Of course, James, in the final analysis, remains a "hemmed-in" bourgeois whose "imagination of loving" does not quite extend to the deprived and the wretched of the earth. A vision such as Shakespeare attains in Lear's speeches on the heath is something beyond him. His ethics then are a complex of personal pieties and loyalties, something akin to E.M. Forster's set of values based upon integral and intuitive reciprocities.

No account of James is really meaningful without a view of his complex techniques, modes of narration and style. For, in his "theory" of fiction, which we find elaborated in his critical essays, notebooks and prefaces, etc., "the search for form" is, at bottom, an ontological quest. In other words, all those celebrated techniques and narrational aids—the point of view or the commanding center, foreshortening, rotation of aspects, framing, etc. —have been evolved and used with a view to hoisting a vision of life. In a few lamentable cases, such techniques, when stretched, do prove "a wonder of wasted ingenuity," to recall his own phrase from a different context, but, on the whole, his dramatic novels of the final phase in particular suggest the limits of fabulation few other novelists have got in sight of.

As for his prose style, with its grand rolling periods, multiplying metaphors, obsessive images, interlocking phrases, indirect flourishes, involved parentheses and the like, it has, more than anything else, exasperated the James reader. No wonder it has been called cobwebby, verbose, mannered and mandarin, etc. While Thomas Hardy noted in his diary that James had "a ponderously warm manner of saying nothing in infinite sentences," H.G. Wells compared the late style to "a hippopotamus balancing a pea on its snout," or "a leviathan retrieving a pebble." The most graphic description comes from Hugh Walpole who sees the Master as "a quite legendary figure, a sort of stuffed waxwork from whose

The American Review

mouth a stream of colored sentences, like winding rolls of green and pink paper, are for ever issuing." An amusing little anecdote in this regard was related to me by Professor Blake Nevius of the UCLA during a river cruise on the Elbe at the time of the IAUPE conference in Hamburg last year. He had, in turn, had it from the mouth of Edith Wharton herself when the Grand Dame of American Letters was past 70. James reportedly met one Carolyn King Duer, a New York socialite from a patrician family at an opera, and started a long, involved and involuted sentence in his typical style. Noticing a hint of visible bewilderment on her face, he quipped: "Courage, madam, the verb is coming!" However, for anyone really broken to this style, it soon becomes apparent that the rhetorical universe of James has, at its poetic best, an integral link with his world-view. The style, in sum, *becomes*, insight. Its elegance and air of well-bred ease bespeak classical continuities and felicities. The ambassadorial prose with its high tone is really a question of style and stance in life.

A word about James's "complex fate" of being an American before I turn briefly to the man behind the books. The so-called "international" theme in his work—the clash of European manners and American morals—is really a dramatic summation of the unresolved conflict in his own mind. While his heart beat continually to the charm and adventure of American life with its openesses and generousities, his imagination was forever ensnared by Europe with its graces and refinements. However, as he grew older, America surfaced in his fiction as a massive metaphor for the energies of the spirit. Though himself uprooted, he counselled Edith Wharton to remain "tethered in native pastures" in the interests of her life and art. Similarly, he asked his nephew as late as 1899 "to contact local saturations and attachments in respect to their own great and glorious country." Clearly, in the end, as *The American Scene* (1907) testifies, at least a part of the Jamesian psyche was in tune with the deeper rhythms of the American Dream. I think Leon Edel is right to claim for him a kind of "cosmopolitan" culture in the end. The inscription on his tombstone in a Cambridge (Massachusetts) cemetery, where he lies buried and gathered with his family, is both apt and telling. It reads thus: "Novelist and interpreter of his generation on both sides of the sea." And now, full 70 years after his interment, thanks to the Jamesian scholars and admirers, he at last finds a memorial slab in the Poet's Corner inside Westminster Abbey. Leon Edel's soulful tribute on that occasion, which synchronized with the American bicentenary celebrations in 1976, ends on this note: "We rejoice in this benign articulate silence, under these high arches, these dim transepts. For in a symbolic sense, the great Abbey now grandly entombs him." In the fall of 1983 the words rang in my ears as I stood before that hallowed stone to muse over "the altar of the dead," as I did in May 1970, when leaving Harvard, I visited the cemetery and the grave in the company of an adorable American woman. W.H. Auden's invocation in his famous poem, "At the Grave of Henry James," was almost in the same strain: "Master of nuance and scruple,/ Pray for me and for all writers living or dead."

In one respect James's personal or private life is as transparent as plate glass in strange contrast with his highly wrought and laminated fiction. Nothing

very important or shattering appears to have disturbed its tenor over long stretches of years. Like John Marche of the celebrated story, "The Beast in the Jungle," James too must have pondered deeply the fate of a man who was destined to draw a blank in life. His image as a Victorian worthy in top hat and coattails repairing to English country houses and London parlors and clubs in an unending round of visits, and his image as a prude notoriously nervous in relation to sex and marriage would seem to hold if the evidence of his novels and tales were not to suggest a whole brood of Freudian fixations beneath a smooth and serene surface. As the narrator of the tale, "The Death of the Lion" observes, "The artist's life's his work, and this is the place to observe him."

And there I see a radically sexual imagination at work, particularly in the enigmatic and symbolic productions of the final phase. That celebrated "obscure hurt"—an injury probably to his genitals—, the death of his young cousin, Minny Temple, the "bride" of his imagination, the ineffectual efforts of so many attractive women, among them women novelists like Edith Wharton, Constance Fenimore Woolson, Rhoda Broughton, to involve him in their lives, the passionate language of the letters to young men like Anderson, Fullerton, Walpole and Perse in old age—all these things finally become the armature of his art, binding the passion grid underneath. There's many a story about his squeamishness and his retreat before passion, such as the one about Maupassant asking him in a London hotel to procure him a woman and his utter bewilderment and confusion, but such stories seem not to take into account the oblique nature of James's sexuality which erupts powerfully in his work from time to time. The long line of nymphets in his novels alone reveals a strong erotic streak in him, not to speak of the pronounced element of voyeurism in some major tales. There was even, as Montgomery Hyde avers "a Rabelaisian side to his character" known only to his intimate friends. That he remained in actual life a distant sniffer, a remote connoisseur of sex, a lover *manque*, perhaps even a virgin, only shows the devious and negative nature of his sexual imagination. At the same time, the theme of the missed beauties and blisses of youth, which finds its most extended treatment in *The Ambassadors*, does establish the ache of the void in the novelist's own life.

I feel tempted in the end to reconstruct imaginatively a day in the life of the Old Master at Lamb House in Rye (Sussex)—"the little old cobble-stoned, grass-grown, red-roofed town on the summit of its mildly pyramidal hill," as he described it in a letter. I see him elegantly and tastefully dressed in the morning before the day's work begins, and the world around is dissolved in the dream of writing. Strolling out into the luscious, well-tended lawns with his beloved *dachshund*, Max, at his heel, nodding indulgently to the gardener, George Gammon, *en route*, he seems lost in the vision of the composition that lies ahead till noon. The parlor maid, Alice Skinner, and the house-boy, Burgess Noakes, are given the necessary instructions for the day. And meanwhile, figures of thought and idiom begin to enact a quiet tableau within the globe of his mind. The breakfast despatched, he summons his secretary, comely Mary Weld, for long spells of dictation. The spacious, booklined study (in winter, the Green Room) exudes an air of solemnity and ceremony. No cutflowers in vases, please! Dusting a book here and there with a silk handkerchief, he, at last, is ready for that flow of words that's to

enchant us all. Pacing up and down, he begins on a quiet, low note, but as the imagination begins to warm up to the situation of a Strether or a Milly Theale, words come singing as though dropping from his 'branched thoughts'. Each punctuation mark is indicated, each phrase given its associational color and stress, as Miss Weld struggles to cope with the rhetoric in high tide. He stops, now and then for a sip or two of his favorite drink of barley water, lemon and sugar, and once again, the mills of the mind set up a soft, rhythmic hum. And thus the music of words continues till he 'wakes up' to the call of lunch. The day's work done, he settles down to the chores of a country squire. Presently, a Rye resident presents himself on some business, or, more interestingly, a friend like Edith Wharton, James's "Angel of Devastation," drives up in her noisy new car for a week-end stay. The Master of Lamb House takes it all in his serene stride. The famed "King's Room" (where George Second passed a couple of nights when forced ashore by a tempest) now rocks with volleys of wit and laughter. The high tone of things at Lamb House abides.

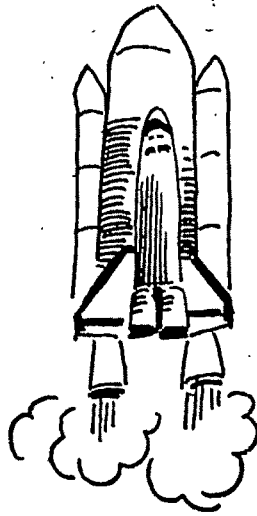
Perhaps the closest view of the later James can best be distilled from the visionary letters of the final phase. Their Edwardian stuffiness notwithstanding, they carry an air of graciousness and felicity. In these missives, the Old Master is seen dispensing magnanimities of wit and wisdom. Till the end, the superb stylist in him seeks the right word, the Flaubertian *mot juste* which can be turned by the flick of the imagination into an epiphany. The chromatic effects are achieved with a splash of adjectives and multiplying metaphors. No wonder, John Singer Sargent who did the Master's great portrait said *apropos* of these letters that he had the feeling of "watching the evolution of a bird of paradise in a tropical jungle." And yet, the massive foliage of metaphors cannot hide the essential loneliness of his declining years. The ache and the void abide.

We move for the moment to the last few days of the great man in London. As the news of the Order of Merit—the highest civil honor in Great Britain—is conveyed by Edmund Gosse to the ailing novelist, he turns to his maid: 'Kidd, turn off the light to spare my blushes.' And then that day of the tryst with 'the Great Thing', February 28, 1916. He dictates two letters to Miss Bosanquet as though he were Napoleon Bonaparte! Interestingly enough, he uses the old Corsican spelling, *Napoleané*, for signing the last words he was to utter. What visions of life and power cross the fading mind, what empires and dynasties of dreams, is difficult to tell. All we know from those gathered around at the death-bed is that as he finally lay dead, his face assumed a remarkable resemblance to the face of the French Emperor!

However, the image that finally stays in one's memory is the one captured in Sargent's classical portrait of the novelist presented to him on his 70th birthday along with 'a golden bowl' by his admirers that included great writers, artists, statesmen, aristocrats, ambassadors and their ilk. Now in the custody of the National Portrait Gallery, London, it had once been "scalped" by a protesting suffragette, though soon restored to its original power and glory. Here we see not the "bearded Buddha" or the "sea captain" or the "lay cardinal" of Lamb House, but a patrician turned ambassador in the employ of a vintage imagination. There is about the finished picture a high tone, a hint of earned *hauteur*. This is perhaps what he wished to be; this was his *pe-sona*, his willed mask. While

Henry James and the Dream of Fiction

the 'Roman' face suggests at once a packed power and an egg-shell delicacy, the penetrating eyes, slightly clouded by a masterful dream, seem to be piercing the void beyond. □



Views on Print, Computers and Democratic Societies

By IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

Early discussions of the potential political impact of the new electronic technology suggested that it might have an adverse effect on democracy because of the possibilities for control of information. But today, says sociologist Irving Louis Horowitz, growing experience with computer technology makes it clear that this development is hardly inevitable. Horowitz is convinced that print will continue to play an important role in a multimedia future, and he emphasizes that the newer technologies themselves "contain the potential for including ever larger numbers of people in the mainstream of democratic participation." Horowitz, a distinguished professor of sociology and political science at Rutgers University in New Jersey, is also editor of *Society*, a leading journal in the social sciences.

RESPONSES to computer technology seem to fall into two camps. The first is grounded in what might be called the Orwellian or counterutopian model. The new technology is feared as inevitably dominated or controlled by a small political clique or power elite, capable of maneuvering and manipulating mass sentiments. An entire tradition has like Orwell himself, come to view with deep concern any control or domination of the masses by electronic media. Critiques of the negative potential of mass reprinted communication range from an established position taken in English scholarly circles by Aldous Huxley and C.P. Snow to the social and cultural fears expressed by Dwight Macdonald and Marshall McLuhan. The key issue was not, and is not, the quality of the hardware or the data being transmitted but rather, ownership and control. The new technology in this context becomes only a larger and more ominous evolution of the centralization of authority.

At the other end of the political spectrum are those who have been critical of new technology as a culmination of the imperial capitalist state in which there is the monopolization of the means of communication. These critics are computerized communications systems as a definite threat to the potential for public ownership or popular expression, but usually only in Western societies. There is a fear that ideas will be managed and manipulated not so much by a political elite as by an economic ruling class. If one looks closely at the two main lines of criticism, their arguments and conclusions present striking parallels.

The question for both camps is essentially the same: who will dominate the political order? Their bitter differences reside more over which elites are identi-

Views on Print, Computers and Democratic Societies

fied as the main enemy of freedom rather than over attitudes toward the significance of new technology as such. In this regard, both those who fear totalitarian implications and those who fear class domination of a computer-oriented world reflect a long-standing difficulty in understanding an advanced society in transition. There is a serious doubt that a society in which traditional modes of expression have become obsolete can at the same time preserve traditional forms of political rights. The extremes represented by these antipodal positions fuse: both share an assumption that no political good will evolve from the new information technology.

The concerns that have been expressed in the printing industry, which will be most directly affected by a shift of preference from print to the new video formats, are specific extensions of these general premonitions and predispositions. While such concerns are often couched in the rhetoric of business prospects and profits, they are the same kinds of worries that have occupied literary and scientific people working in mass communications throughout the 20th century. Still, there is little if anything to suggest that the flow of print has contracted under the impact of the new technology. In fact, the opposite is clearly the case. As one report states: "In 1950, when the impact of television first began to be felt, 11,022 books were published in the United States. In 1970, when the impact of the computer began to reach major proportions, the number of books had risen to 36,071. In 1979, after almost 30 years of television and 10 years of major computer use, 45,182 books were published in the United States."

Such figures indicate not only that the printed word can survive in the new world of computers but that the potential for democratic political systems is promising as well. Although such potential cannot be automatically realized, there are five factors in its favor: (1) the increased amount of information made available by the new technology; (2) the necessarily active role of the participant in much of this technology; (3) the corresponding capacity for confirmation and verification of information to an extent previously unavailable; (4) the public rather than privileged nature of computerized information; (5) a redefinition of the very structure of information and cultural climates within society.

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It has been argued that the sheer abundance of data can produce a system contaminated with "information pollution." There is supposed to be a corresponding "drugging" of society by the mass media. While this has been a major concern of researchers, a vital point has too often been missed, namely, that the massing of information is by no means an intrinsic evil. So much of the post-World War II sociological literature on information and communication was laden with moral imputations about the dangers of a "mass" society that the explosion of expectations opened up by radio, television and satellite communication became strangely converted for intellectuals into threats and predicaments. Even those who made a more realistic appraisal of information technology tended to focus on questions of leisure and mass culture. One has to search the literature of social science far and wide to come up with a serious analysis of information transmission and democracy.

The discussions now beginning to take place about the relationship between



The American Review

the new information technology and democracy are not unlike the earlier literature I have been describing. There is the same tendency to perceive recent developments in science as favoring elites, dooming masses, narcotizing recipients, manipulating the poor and massaging the wealthy. But if we keep in mind that earlier literature and recognize frankly that its most dire predictions have not occurred or at least have been counter-balanced by positive developments in communications, we can then consider the new technology as a promoter of democracy and free expression.

A modular, gridlike pattern of information storage and retrieval such as that permitted by teletext allows for a wider level of choice and decision than previous forms of telecommunications. If one takes into account that standard television viewing provides a maximum of 99 channels and if we multiply that by 99 additional outlets within each of the original channel separations, the outcome is roughly 10,000 active possibilities available to video viewing at any given time. These may range from shopping lists to updated information on such subjects as industrial patents and airline schedules. New forms of two-way, interactive communication such as videotex permit even higher levels of retrieval, storage and utilization of data to larger numbers of people who in the past had been largely passive recipients of such information.

Despite the fear that these video technologies may mean the end of the printed word, we are instead moving toward a multitiered system: one based on both hard copy and video information bases. These serve very different but mutually important purposes. The parallel may be radio and television: television did not replace radio, but it did influence the content disseminated by the older medium. With video information systems we are now at a point where each family, individual or business unit may have at its disposal 10,000 different "titles" or forms of upgraded information—far more than any average home or office can presently maintain, much less store—and in addition hard copy for more abstracted and more portable forms of information. Broadening the amount of information accessible through technological devices opens up channels of choice and decision making for individuals that hitherto had been available only to powerful elites within a society.

We are already living in an environment which has a multilayered media system. The audience which continues to buy a mystery novel or a philosophic treatise in hard copy will also insist upon having a personal computer to obtain access to financial data banks for updating portfolios. The individualization of information, not the collectivization of ideology, is now both possible and probable. Policies to implement a competitive information environment thus become a democratic imperative. The key is competition and not monopolization of the sources of ideas.

Communications technology encourages active rather than passive public involvement. Whatever the virtues possessed by traditional printed material—from ease of use and retrieval to shifting back and forth within a journal or book—the act of reading a given book or periodical remains relatively passive and singular. How information is structured, and moreover what is not revealed, is decided by others. Unless one is dogged and determined, it is difficult outside of a library to verify data or check possible sources of confusion, misunderstanding

Views on Print, Computers and Democratic Societies

or even downright error. Alternative information sources still go largely unchecked.

The new technology permits a higher level of interactional involvement. One can confirm or disprove factual information, test propositions and develop comparabilities not envisioned by the author or the original source—all in the comfort of one's home.

In interactive videotex systems, we may be moving beyond an environment in which the individual passively receives images and signals. The multiplication of images will stimulate a computer involvement which will permit not only verification and correction of information but also the capacity to relay information from the individual back to various stations or data banks with which that person is connected. Voting behavior, for example, may change dramatically as it becomes possible to cast ballots through a hook-up between a television receiver and a mainframe computer. Opinions and votes may be cast on matters of local interest just as on those of national interest. One will be able to view the activities of local boards of directors of corporations, local courtrooms, federal hearings or government political offices. Optimally, this sort of information will be plugged into a cable access system, permitting the individual to see, hear and register his personal points of view almost instantaneously. Heightened technical complexity will result in a decline in human passivity and thus broaden the scope of the democratic process. This is a process linking not simply individuals but communities and continents as well.

With the tendency to exaggerate technological innovation, the idea has taken root that advocates of a continuing role for books and journals are somehow obstacles to progress. This idea rests on the notion that a single-tiered, paperless world is an inevitable outcome of the new technology. In fact, some researchers see an impending paperless society just over the horizon and are turning their attention to the social consequences of a world without books.

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But before sounding such alarms, we should observe the obvious anomaly that such forebodings about the demise of the printed word invariably appear in conventional books and journals. The problem in the single-tiered approach is a failure to reckon with the great variety in the structure of thought. Organized rationalized conceptions are of three sorts: information, ideas and interpretations. While one can readily appreciate how legal documents, government economic statistics and specialized abstracting services can be designed to displace conventional journals and reference volumes, the need for ideas that permit a range of interpretations is not readily subject to a paperless environment. A government's potential to control communications and crush opposition in an abstract sense is in actuality restricted by the greater availability of multiple forms of information dissemination, idea construction and interpretative analysis.

The history of science and technology indicates that the newest modes of communication and transportation do not liquidate the need for earlier forms. While supersonic jet travel may make sense at great global distances, conventional jets or railroads may work more economically at shorter distances, and

The American Review

automobiles, buses and trucks are clearly best for local travel. Those for whom democracy is a central issue would do well to recognize that the value of a multi-tiered approach is a question of ideology no less than empirics.

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The political problem during the final years of the 20th century lies not in the amount of scientific information and material available but in how to recognize and gain access to the value and significance of so much data. Such a plethora of technical options has been made available that society is threatening to fall behind in the orderly processing of information as such. Democracy works best within a set of commonly accepted guidelines and acted-upon procedures. It is not reducible to pure choice within the confines of a normless external environment. If the potential for a near-insoluble problem does exist within the new technology, it is less with its totalitarian capabilities than its anarchic consequences. The multiplication of options may well increase chances for anomie and normlessness rather than a "drugging" based upon an information overload.

If researchers have had a difficult time providing a conceptual map of the relationship between the new technology and political democracy, it is not for lack of data. Rather it is because too much attention has been focused upon the short-run consequences for publishers of hard copy and also because there remains a deep suspicion that technology in and of itself creates unanticipated negative outcomes. Theories of a new information technology have made evident a generational gap: an older generation for which hard copy is a symbol of status, achievement and arrival and a young generation for whom video has become an important means of conveying information. The heroes of the young are less the authors of novels than figures who dominate television, whether they be in newscasting or entertainment fields.

Many of the presumed weaknesses of the new technology concern assumptions about the appropriateness of certain formats to deliver data and ideas to precise audiences. But, in fact, the multi-tiered approach can adjust for such shortcomings. For example, video may be a dominant force in matters of cultural transition and transformation. Yet, when people go to an airport, they may prefer to buy a paperback book rather than carry a videopack. Even with miniaturization, electronic nonprint media may not be a preferred mode for delivering information, certainly not in any foreseeable future. In the 1980s, it is still cheaper and far easier to put paperback volumes into an airport newsstand than to put videopacks into the same space.

The relationship between political democracy and the new technology is by no means either uniform or mechanistic. In rapidly developing areas, nationalism may conflict with the wide use of a technology that has foreign or colonial origins. Antidemocratic constraints come masked in hostility to foreign ideas, influences and scientific systems. The intense desire for national autonomy not infrequently leads to tightly knit controls over the new information technology. As one observer has noted, there are definite limits to such restraints: "On the one hand, there is tremendous demand from all sectors of the economy for computer hardware and software; on the other, there is the principle of diminishing the scientific, technological and economic dependence of the country. Controls

Views on Print, Computers and Democratic Societies

on information flow can be justified on the basis of national security, privacy, economics or nationalism. The restrictions, however, are often a two-edged sword: they may protect the country in one way and injure it in another." The need for socio-economic development involves maximum participation in the international exchange of information and ideas, even as the need to protect national interests may seek elites to limit such maximal use.

But probably the greatest impediments to the process of computerization are the scientific and professional societies representing the creators and authors of information. Without examining the merits and demerits of the great debate on the right of public access versus the obligation to recognize proprietary claims, it should be appreciated that the notion of confidentiality, when carried to its ultimate logic, is also a powerful restraint on the democratization of culture. Everything from the statutory protection of privileged data to the development of limited partnership arrangements between universities and industries has a dampening impact on the broad use of information and ideas. Cornell University researcher Dorothy Nelkin has described the current contradictory tendencies within professional life with great accuracy. She points out that the response of scientists

rests on a notion that scientists have a "right" to control their research, that autonomy is necessary in order to maintain integrity, to avert the misinterpretation of premature data and to protect their "stock in trade." Those who request data claim the "right to know" as an essential condition of democracy. Government agencies claim the right to information as part of their obligation to ensure responsible use of federal funds, to meet policy goals or to maintain national security or law enforcement in the public interest. Contradictions persist, reflecting the deep ambivalence within science about its cognitive and practical dimensions. Is science the pursuit of truth or the pursuit of useful knowledge, a carefully disciplined process or a professional instrumental activity? The ambivalence so apparent in the disputes over the control of research suggests that there have been significant changes in the social role of science and in the importance of research.

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These disputes are part of a larger struggle to renegotiate relations between science and the public. This suggests that the new electronic technology heightens the awareness of democracy as a dilemma but does not in or of itself lead to either egalitarian or dictatorial outcomes.

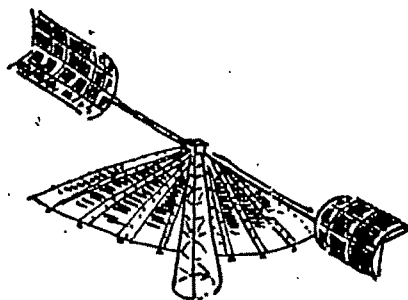
The plethora of new developments in information dissemination provides a potential for democratic expression hitherto unavailable. I have indicated that problems created by a new technology are not purely pedestrian but rather illustrate a struggle between economic and educational classes, between those who do and those who do not have the ability to manage and manipulate this technology for their own goals. We may well reach a point where a sophisticated portion of the population is capable of managing a new information system and thus becomes the elite of a democratic society, while an entire other stratum of people, for whom such technology remains mystery, sinks to become the plebeians of a

The American Review

computerized culture. Whether this division will be played out into a class struggle or becomes a new way in which society is benignly stratified remains to be seen. But it should be evident that the uneven distribution of hardware and software components makes for a special problem in democracy and, it should be added, a more costly one than the uneven distribution of books.

The issue of computer literacy is nothing other than the issue of literacy writ large for a future that is upon us. Whatever its stage of evolution, technology neither opens nor closes possibilities automatically. It does provide for new options and hence new dangers and opportunities. The new technology contains the potential for including ever larger numbers of people in the mainstream of democratic participation. These challenges remain political no less than technical. Hopes for future developments in the new technology require a sense of user needs even more than manufacturer capabilities.

The central challenge posed by the new technology is simply this: to reduce the number of people for whom the computer remains a mystery—and a menace. The problem of illiteracy now extends beyond words into electronics. The task of democracy is not simply to widen the opportunities offered by the new technology but, more significantly, to increase greatly the number of people involved. Democracy is not just a question of options for elites but a social responsibility to bring the largest total of eligible voters into the decision-making framework. At this level the problem of the new technology has not begun to receive proper attention; yet it is at this level of mass participation and technical literacy that the issue of democracy in the next century will receive its heaviest challenges. □



INTERNATIONAL LAW IN PRACTICE

By ROBERT J. MYERS

The reviewer is president of the
Council on Religion and International
Affairs.

*Law, Morality, and the Relations of
States.* By Terry Nardin. Princeton
University Press, 351 pp.

IT is rare to come across a book on international relations that looks at the subject through fresh eyes and moves one to make new connections, to pause from time to time to nod and say, "Yes, that is true and valuable." Such earlier works as Frederick Schuman's *International Politics* and Hans J. Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations* are of that order. Terry Nardin's book, providing a "practical theory of how the international system actually works," may well rank with them.

Schuman wanted to present international politics from the viewpoint of the "new political science," going outside the framework of legal and diplomatic history. Morgenthau wanted to explicate the role of power in the new, more dangerous bipolar world so that foreign policy might develop in terms of national strength and national interest. This was the way to preserve the peace.

Both these books in their day continued the debate between the idealists—

who sought an international order based on transcendent values and were often led to embrace simplistic or one-issue doctrines or systems (pacifism, world government)—and the realists—who considered themselves better attuned to the subtleties of world politics and saw the practice of the art of the possible as the best that could be done.

"My aim in this book is to consider the ideas of law, morality and society as they pertain to the relations of states," begins Nardin, a political science professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo. "These ideas are central and not, as many hold, peripheral to the study of international relations. I want to defend the view that the practices of international law and international morality constitute the indispensable foundation of all durable international association. To the extent that the relations of states achieve a significant degree of permanence, rising above the level of mere episodes in the separate histories of isolated political communities, they must be understood as taking place on the basis of common, authoritative practices and rules. And this, I shall argue, means that they must be understood as occurring within a world of legal and moral orders."

Nardin disassociates his "practical conception of international society, law and morality" from the idealist-realist debate. "The attitudes both of those realists for whom the common rules are only to be recognized as authoritative when they serve the national interest and of those idealists who insist that the only authoritative rules are those that serve the common interests of states, or of mankind, are equally misconceived." In dealing with the idea of international society, Nardin theorizes that the real way law and morality

operate in the international context is when states follow procedures in concert as a result of their own individual interests, rather than in a "purposive" way, which would require them to share values and ends. This, in practice, is the way that international society continues to function—and far better, perhaps, than is generally recognized.

The book is divided into three parts: the first part considers the ways international law has developed over the centuries; the second considers authoritative practices that have resulted in "positive" law—that is, according to Grotius, instituted or voluntary law, which derives from "the will of all nations or of many." The third part considers the moral aspects of all these traditional rules and procedures that govern relations among states.

Nardin argues that international law as it exists today is strong and well. He is not moved by the traditional arguments of European scholars that international society is simply a primitive anarchy when compared with the domestic society of any nation-state. It was that flawed perception that first produced the idealist imperative for world government (Kant, Mill) that would require the international scene to match the conditions of the domestic one—a community of shared beliefs, customs and laws, with their enforcement regulated by "the legal values of certainty, consistency, uniformity and impartiality." Short of this, the traditional argument runs, anarchy will continue.

Nardin focuses on two points: (a) positive international law procedures, although they lack centralized institutions, carry considerable weight in international society; (b) morality plays a governing role in the way states actually deal with each other, and moral

concerns have, to some extent, weakened the absolute sovereignty of a state over its inhabitants.

During a time of particular world tension, it is well to remember that the skein of customary international agreements is still in place. Even Morgenthau, after his deprecatory comments on the effectiveness of international law, was ready to state: "The actual situation is much less dismal than the foregoing analysis might suggest. The great majority of the rules of international law are generally observed by all nations without compulsion, for it is generally in the interest of all nations concerned to honor their obligations under international law."

Schuman lists the form that sanctions of international law take as habit, expediency, good faith and organized force. High on his list is habit—"the whole force of inertia"—since "states, no less than individuals, are prone to do things in ways that are easy because traditional." Nardin raises the argument several levels, however, by keeping his own line argument close to the distinction between domestic and international society. These, he argues, are really different in kind. Shared values and ends—the stuff of community—should not be expected, and are certainly not required for international society. In fact, as Gibbon and others have stated, the pluralism of international society may be better than "shared values."

As for international morality, Nardin relates it to the development of international law. They are tied together by a similar vocabulary of "obligation, justice and rights." But here too there is a conflict between an idealist and a realist morality. One is a morality of perfection; the other allows for change and a new cycle of criticism. Nardin

recognizes the difficulty of finding a single international morality but concludes that "not everyone is committed to a pluralistic world, but everyone must live in one. The common morality reflects an appreciation of that fact." International justice is also a value on which many agree in regard to some human rights, but they do not agree on rights that involve notions of distributive justice—an agreed-upon division of the world's material goods. Nardin finds more agreements on practical procedure than many would anticipate, given the fact that the principles of international law have largely evolved from the experience of the states of Western Europe.

So how does all this end? The book goes to considerable length to demonstrate that the idea of international society is not the same as the idea of domestic society with the shared values and goals a host of sociologists consider essential for governance; but neither is international society a primitive anarchical state. It is pluralistic, held together by history and legal precedents: "In the absence of agreements, agreement on procedures is required if destructive conflict is to be avoided." The reader may decide whether to place this thesis in the idealist or realist school. But Nardin has given us an important tool and a valuable theoretical device for analyzing that gray area between war and peace where international relations hover today. □



WHAT CAUSES INNOVATION

By DON K. PRICE

The reviewer, professor emeritus at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is the author of *America's Unwritten Constitution: Science, Religion and Political Responsibility*.

Political Innovation in America: The Politics of Policy Initiation.

By Nelson W. Polsby.

Yale University Press, 185 pp.

POLITICAL scientists who aim to interpret what goes on in the U.S. federal government divide into factions that are nearly as contentious as the partisan or bureaucratic objects of their observation. In earlier generations, historians, lawyers and political theorists dominated. More recently, the success of the research techniques developed during World War II have made more fashionable the analytic and quantitative approach of the systems analyst. But the two approaches leave a major gap for those who seek to understand the new developments in the federal government.

Nelson W. Polsby's new book is an impressive effort to fill that gap, and a successful one. It begins with a series of case studies on the initiation of eight major new policies of the postwar era, on the assumption that the case study is "a practical halfway house between arrant speculation and arid precision."

Taken simply as bits of political nar-

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rative, the case studies make fascinating reading. Three deal with innovations in domestic policy: health insurance, community action programs and the creation of the Council of Economic Advisors. Two are in foreign policy: Truman's decision in 1947 to give aid to Greece and Turkey, and the formulation of the Peace Corps. Three cut across conventional boundaries by dealing with postwar innovations in science policy: civilian control of atomic energy, the creation of the National Science Foundation and the nuclear test ban treaty. Polsby recognizes that the conventional domestic-foreign distinction does nothing to explain the ways new policies are born. In spite of the fact that many observers assume that foreign policy is the preserve of the executive, these cases suggest that the real story is far more complex.

Polsby is frank to acknowledge that it is by no means clear what a policy is. To admit that at the outset is a sensible step, but one that is so disrespectful of current academic fashions as to require considerable courage. So he settles for defining a policy innovation (if I may oversimplify his terms) as a development in public affairs that is big, that is a major change in direction and that has a lasting effect. Next he asks seven specific questions about each of his policy innovations, in order to see what made them work out as they did. He asks, for example, how much time elapsed between the time an idea was proposed and when it was finally enacted. He asks how much the policy was shaped by scientists or specialists, and how much its issues were defined by political generalists. His final question is more complex: whether the innovation was one that grew out of a long-recognized need, or whether people failed to see that the need existed until

someone discovered a feasible way of dealing with it.

By first narrating his eight cases and then analyzing them according to his seven questions, Polsby produces an interpretation that is far more systematic than the typical historical essay or institutional description. He holds back from pushing his conclusions too far, but at the very least, it would not be stretching his line of thought to observe that he debunks most explicitly some of the most popular ways of interpreting federal governmental affairs. The old habit of separating the legislative from the administrative process has made for a great deal of sterile scholarship as well as facile journalism. It comes, perhaps, from the popular—especially the populist—faith that the voice of the people and the votes of the legislature ought to determine policies, a simplistic view that makes no allowance for considerations of administrative feasibility or the advice of bureaucratic experts.

The picture that Polsby presents is more complex, and much more realistic. The later stages of a policy's incubation are obviously involved with the rivalry between congressional leaders and the Presidency in the exploitation of a new idea or the solution of a new problem. But the substance of policy is not affected only by the competition between the powers separated by the Constitution at the top level of the organization chart. The "organizational needs of bureaucracies," he notes, are a "final routine source of stimuli to innovation." For example, his story of the civilian control of atomic energy started with a scientific laboratory threatened with extinction. As the laboratory searched for ways to remain useful, it began also to seek to innovate and to invent new policies."

The book is full of illustrations of the fact that in the United States there is no such thing as a true bureaucracy. In the civil service at its upper levels, every department has a mix of career officers, political appointees and "in-and-outers," who move back and forth between government and private institutions. No department permits any civilian to become the hierarchical head of its whole career structure, in the way each military service has a chief of staff or a commanding officer; and there is no effective organization of the career civil service throughout the government as a whole. These constraints, coupled with the zealous defense of "freedom of information" by a press with more access to the inside story on policy development than any other in the world, make for an open system, in which along with politicians the "experts are nearly everywhere." Its conspicuous fault is not domination by a tight bureaucracy, but diffusion among a welter of special interests, inside as well as outside the government.

These special interests, Polsby points out, interact with experts and policy makers, and rely on experts for knowledge about the ways in which problems have previously been handled elsewhere, by other countries as well as by state governments and private institutions. The typical interest groups—whether a government agency or a private group like the United Auto Workers or the American Medical Association—"operate through agents, typically 'experts' who focus routinely not on the problems of organizational management, but on the cultivation of policy-related ideas."

This interpretation, which is well documented by the case studies and their analysis, challenges two conventional ways of thinking about govern-

ment in the United States. One is the assumption of a dichotomy between policy and administration, or between ends and means. Polsby's more realistic view is that you cannot decide what you want to do without knowing whether it is feasible and economical to do it, and that the people who know most about how to do it cannot be left out of the decision.

As this book digs in some depth into the way new policies are actually developed, it identifies another way in which the American political system is peculiar. In practice, the boundary between government and private institutions has been getting more and more blurred. This blurring is related, of course, to the movement of both scientists and administrators back and forth between government and private institutions. But it takes two particular forms hardly known in other countries.

One is the way in which private foundations, with the benefit of tax exemptions, take on essentially public functions that in other countries are governmental. This role has let their officials, operating from a politically sheltered base, play an enterprising part in public policy innovation. The other is the way in which, since World War II, new policies have often involved the contracting out of governmental functions to private corporations and institutions for administration.

Polsby leaves to the reader the question of how the electorate may hold accountable the chaotic mixture of specialized interests that the book describes so vividly. Can the United States have a responsible two-party system, in which each party has a coherent ideology that makes sense of diverse issues? The old dream of a constitutional change to imitate the parliamen-

tary system was based on that hope. Or are the issues in the modern world so complex and varied—so inconsistent with the variety of class and regional and ethnic interests—as to make it more realistic for the electorate to rely on a crude comparison of the broad sympathies of two rival presidential candidates, leaving the decision on specific policies to the looser discipline of congressional committees and career administrators who are qualified by specialized education and experience?

Polsby does not answer such questions, but his book will stimulate readers to think about them. And it will make facile answers unacceptable. □

THE BIG BAND TRADITION

By DOUG RAMSEY

The reviewer is vice president of the Foundation for American Communications, a widely published jazz critic and a contributing editor for *Texas Monthly*.

MORE than 20 years ago, in his fourth uninterrupted decade of band leadership, Duke Ellington asked a perennial question in the title of an album: *Will Big Bands Ever Come Back?* Ellington's band, of course, did not have to come back. It had never gone away. But for the most part the answer to his question was and is no. There is no indication that big bands will ever again be synonymous with popular music, as they were for more than a decade in the '30s and '40s.

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Nonetheless, reports of the death of the big band are as exaggerated now as they were in the waning days of the swing era.

Ellington, Count Basie, Woody Herman, Stan Kenton and Harry James kept their bands alive, some through years of layoffs and periodic reorganizations. Herman rolls on, apparently inexhaustible. Mercer Ellington leads the band that bears his father's name, without the famous sidemen but with the incomparable library of Ellington arrangements. Artie Shaw has put together a band and is guiding its destiny, although at this writing he still steadfastly refuses to pick up his clarinet, as he has for 30 years; Boston reed artist Dick Johnson is filling the Shaw solo role. These bandleaders have kept alive the big band tradition and have trained and inspired generations of musicians to work in it.

Mel Lewis and his band recently began their 19th year of playing Monday nights at the Village Vanguard in New York. Bob Moses rehearses and has managed to record his unusual and endearing brand of avant-garde big band music on the recent album *When Elephants Dream of Music*. In Los Angeles, Gerald Wilson, Matt Catingub, Leslie Crayton, Roger Neumann and others maintain rehearsal bands that make records and occasionally play before audiences. It is a rare city that does not have at least one group of professionals who play together in a big jazz band, and there has been an explosion of college and secondary-school bands.

Does all of this training and professional activity mean that thousands of musicians are preparing to play for audiences that are considerably smaller than those of the swing era? Unquestionably. Dedicated big band musicians surely must be frustrated. But re-

cording provides an outlet for some excellent bands that cannot work steadily, as well as for the major league bands (Herman, Lewis, Ellington) that continue to perform. Listeners also can have their choice of releases of big band material from the past.

One reissue immediately takes its place as the definitive collection of big band material. The Smithsonian Institution's *Big Band Jazz: From the Beginnings to the Fifties* is a six-record anthology of 80 recordings that begins with Paul Whiteman in 1924 and ends with Stan Kenton in 1955. The collection and its accompanying illustrated booklet were assembled by two eminent jazz scholars, Martin Williams of the Smithsonian and composer, conductor and author Gunther Schuller. The set includes some enormously popular music, but the choices were not based on popularity. Nor were they based on the brilliance of the soloists, although some are magnificent. Williams and Schuller chose the recordings for their musical value and their importance in illustrating the development of big band writing and playing. Their selections are laudable, though it could be argued that bands such as Gene Krupa's, Gerald Wilson's and Bob Crosby's were worth at least one track apiece.

All of the swing era's superstar band-leaders are represented: Goodman, Webb, Basie, Ellington, Shaw, Lunceford, Miller, Barnet, James and Herman. But their recordings lie side by side with those of Fletcher Henderson, Jesse Stone, the Missourians, Bennie Moten, Andy Kirk, Benny Carter, Elliot Lawrence and others whose fame never matched their artistic achievements.

Through the records and text, we discover that in the '20s Fletcher Hen-

derson evolved the approach taken by nearly all swing-era bands and their successors to this day. We learn that Ellington expanded upon and departed from the Henderson tradition with boldness, assurance and genius. The importance of Bennie Moten's Kansas City Orchestra to the rhythmic liberation of big bands comes through in the joyous "Toby" of 1932. We hear the passion and energy of the Missourians in 1929, the ferocity of Dizzy Gillespie's mold-shattering "Things to Come" in 1946 the spring-steel precision of the Luis Russell reed section in 1934 and Gil Evans's tapestries of sound in his writing for the Claude Thornhill Orchestra in 1947.

The collection reminds us that Glenn Miller's "In the Mood," an irritant in the days when it was heard on radio every half hour, has real musical value and represents Miller's refinement of an old idea; that Charlie Barnet's bands had an aura of abandon never matched by others; that Erskine Hawkins's "Tuxedo Junction" would be a gem even without the unforgettable Dud Bascom trumpet solo. Whether it is approached as a historical document or as entertainment, *Big Band Jazz* overflows with such discoveries and re-discoveries in every selection. □



ECONOMY OF THE SPIRIT

By JOHN JUNKERMAN

The reviewer is a free-lance writer who lives in Boston.

The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property. By Lewis Hyde. Random House/Vintage. 282 pp.

THE Kwakiutl and other American Indians of the north Pacific measured the wealth of their chiefs by the abundance of gifts distributed during potlatch ceremonies. The Maori of New Zealand "feed the spirit" of the forest a portion of the game they kill, in the belief that this will sustain the natural cycle that provides their sustenance. In a Lithuanian folktale, fairies bestow riches upon mortals, but the fortune turns to paper when it is counted. The detoxification programs of Alcoholics Anonymous are free; the only obligation is to help others get off the bottle after one has fully recovered from alcoholism.

From these and a wide array of other examples of gifts and their treatment, Lewis Hyde constructs a theory of gift exchange, or what amounts to a sub-economy of the spirit. He then applies this framework to art and the labors of the imagination, focusing on the poets Walt Whitman and Ezra Pound. *The Gift* is a pioneering effort to understand the "commerce of the creative spirit" and its place in a world dominated by the entirely different (and largely incompatible) market economy.

We often speak of the artist as being

"gifted," without being entirely clear whether we mean this literally or metaphorically. Hyde's starting premise is that creative inspiration is, indeed, a gift. He cites many examples of what apparently is common experience among artists—the sensation that their creative impulse comes to them from an external source.

But the gift does not stop with the artist. After the imagination has transformed inspiration into a work of art, it is, in turn, passed on to the audience in the form of a gift, Hyde contends. This is true even when the artist receives payment; we may buy a book of poetry, for example, and the poet may receive a royalty, but we still experience whatever beauty or wisdom is captured in the poems as a gift.

Because artists operate in the realm of the gift rather than in that of the commodity, they face difficulties making a living. Hyde notes that Whitman lost money on the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, and Pound earned but \$1.85 in American royalties in 1915. Both poets died poor. Hyde, a Massachusetts poet who is attempting to make his way as a "scholar without institution," began this book to examine the tension between art and the market.

Using folktales, the anthropology of gift exchange, contemporary gift situations (such as organ transplants) and other examples, Hyde demonstrates that gifts have special attributes that distinguish them from commodities: gifts increase through use and disappear if they are not used. Gift exchange creates a relationship, whereas the exchange of money for goods leaves nothing in its aftermath. Because gifts carry an obligation to reciprocate, they have momentum.

Hyde's book is challenging, if a touch obscure at times largely because

he is traveling uncharted territory and the powers of gifts are mysterious). However, by illustrating his discussion with anecdotes, Hyde provides the reader with ready access to complex philosophy. It is the poet's task to give concrete meaning to words and ideas, and Hyde does his job skillfully.

Hyde understands gift property as having a generative, integrating, community-building nature that is associated with the Greek *eros*. Commonly held or circulated social property loses these characteristics when it enters the market, which is dominated by rational, individuating and differentiating principles—the Greek *logos*. Hyde reminds us that just as the gift of fortune in the Lithuanian folktale turns to paper when it is counted, the market destroys the “organic cohesion we perceive as liveliness” by making private property of the gift.

Whitman provides plentiful evidence of the artist's connection to *eros* and to the gift. In “Song of Myself” the poet writes: “I effuse my flesh in eddies, and drift it in lacy jags./I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love.” Whitman made a vessel of himself, Hyde writes, to breathe in the wonder of natural and social creation, and then to exhale enthusiastic affirmation. He brought the same spirit to his service as a nurse during the Civil War, when he made daily rounds of army hospitals, dispensing gifts of candy, clothing and comfort to the wounded.

Pound was perhaps equally sensitive to the spirit of *eros*, but his life and work were colored by bitterness toward a modern society that placed little value on art. He tried, in his tragic embrace of Italian fascism and anti-Semitism, to turn back the market economy and revive the imagination.

Pound's was a futile and wrong-

headed struggle. And his rage at usury (*usura*) is a familiar complaint in a world that rewards schlock over art and shadow over substance: “No picture is made to endure nor to live with /but is made to sell and sell quickly /with usura, sin against nature.”

Hyde's discourse on the imagination and creativity will be of particular interest to writers and artists, but his theme of the market's inversion of true worth and its violation of natural bonds touches us all. The heart of the problem, he suggests, is the “old lover's quarrel between liberty and community.” The economy of gift exchange is, by its nature, limited to small groups, and it imposes emotional burdens as a price for social cohesion. The market, despite its alienating and atomizing tendencies, is remarkably efficient and relatively free.

As Pound's life demonstrates, it is fruitless to attempt to destroy money or the market. Hyde calls instead for a reconciliation, the acknowledgment of the double economy—gift and market—in which the artist operates. It will never be an easy coexistence, and we are still a long way from providing the gift with a secure place in society. Hyde's book is a welcome contribution toward that goal. □



HOW WE KNOW WHAT WE KNOW

By HOWARD GRUBER

The reviewer teaches psychology at Rutgers University in New Jersey and at the University of Geneva, Switzerland.

In Search of Mind: Essays in Autobiography. By Jerome Bruner, Harper & Row, 306 pp.

JEROME BRUNER taught psychology at Harvard University from 1945 to 1972, at Oxford University until 1981, and is now at the New School for Social Research in New York. He has been president of the American Psychological Association and is a founding father of the burgeoning field of cognitive science, the study of mental processes and learning. The Sloan Foundation, which is sponsoring a series of scientists' autobiographies, could hardly have chosen a more distinguished psychologist. Bruner gives a rare and engrossing picture of a scientist at work, and shows how it is that such work can be so immensely enjoyable.

As academics go, he has led a more colorful life than most—for example, crossing the Atlantic in his own sailboat when he was shifting from Harvard to Oxford. But even at its stormiest, *In Search of Mind* requires that most of the reader's time be spent in quiet havens. Yet it is fun because, for Bruner, nothing is more fun than thinking and testing out ideas with the

research tools of psychology. And because he has no great system or ideology to purvey, no unalterable vested interest to protect, Bruner can afford to play, explore, try out new vessels, sail the bounding main of 20th-century psychology.

The years since World War II span both his career and a remarkable era of explosive growth in scientific psychology. His story tells much about the field and the culture that begot it. He calls his book "essays in autobiography," which is fair enough, since it is mainly a series of essays in the history of ideas as lived by one man and the people around him. For Bruner, the life of the mind is the life. That is where the action is, and he tells that story well—sometimes wittily, often passionately, always theatrically.

Occasionally alone, but more often in collaboration with a few others, Bruner has triggered a number of significant turns in research psychology. Together with Leo Postman, he set off the "new look" movement in perceptual research. Together with George Miller, he founded the Center for Cognitive Studies at Harvard, the first of its kind. He has made important contributions to developmental psychology, to the psychology of play and the study of thinking. His little book, *The Process of Education*, reporting on an international conference on curriculum in science education in 1959, was a seminal work, linking the themes of the structure of knowledge and the activity of the knower in ways that made it a manifesto for educational reform.

After a colorful sketch of his youth, Bruner settles into an account of his 27 years at Harvard. This part of the story must begin with a description of the peculiar realities of the intellectuals' world where, as philosopher Karl

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pitched, often rasping voice plus a tendency toward disjointed movements, and we may be forgiven for wondering whether Hoffman has been miscast. All doubts disappear, however, as soon as we see him as Loman returning home in the dim evening light, exhausted and staggering under the weight of two heavy suitcases containing his samples.

Willy Loman's assigned territory is New England, but at the end of an unsuccessful trip—indeed, one he had to interrupt when he noticed his mind wandering and his car wheels skidding—he could be a traveling salesman anywhere. When the French actor Claude Dauphin—who knew the American theater and American life firsthand—played the part in an industrial suburb north of Paris, his Loman won immediate acceptance. To the working-class audience Loman was not an exotic character from across the ocean. Although his job was unfamiliar there, everyone in the house identified with him.

Dustin Hoffman is the universal worker, too. Yet in the salesman's fascination with and terror of the only definitions of success and failure he can imagine, and in the despair of his conflict with his son Biff brought about by those weaknesses, Willy Loman is also typically American. Hoffman's unexpectedly genuine performance captures this very well.

It seems clear that he has interpreted Willy Loman as being close to a clinically defined madman. There are good reasons for this choice. Besides the dramatic possibilities it offers the performer, it recognizes that presentday theatergoers can more easily empathize with a character driven to insanity than one who seems to have been born helplessly insane.

Still, Willy Loman is not a victim of

society. Loman has managed, in his own eyes, to maintain a satisfactory standard of living; his sons did not drop out of college for lack of money, and on the very day of his suicide the last payment has been made on the mortgage on his house. What he succumbs to is professional failure caused by age and exhaustion. The growing and finally crushing mental crisis he suffers seems inevitable in a man convinced that success at work is essential to justifying one's life and is measured by how much money one can go on making. He is brainwashed, but willingly or at least unresistingly so; his explosions of fury are empty, never reaching the level of rebellion.

While *Death of a Salesman* is one of the most important plays of the modern theater, it is not without flaws. The most damaging, in my view, is Miller's emphasis on a kind of Victorianism that was probably already outdated in 1949. Willy and Biff's conflict is not due merely to the father's clinging to his ideal of being a popular salesman and the son's dreaming of becoming anything else but. There is in addition a "Boston mystery," repeatedly alluded to as the key to their troubles. When the revelation finally comes near the end of the evening, it must be a let-down for all except the most puritanical: once, several years ago, Biff caught his father in a Boston hotel with a woman. Is that why Biff has developed a lasting hatred of Willy and become a drifter?

Also, the character of Uncle Ben is inadequately explained. Loman's older brother is an adventurer who periodically arrives from some African jungle and talks constantly about his travels. Ben deals in diamonds, but he is not Willy's brand of salesman. For Biff and his brother Happy, Uncle Ben pro-

vides a whiff of excitement, possibly an antidote to the boredom their father exhales. What Willy sees in him, why he quotes Ben so much, is unclear. Perhaps for the father, too, Ben sparks a hidden desire for excitement. Deep down, Loman may regret that the only adventure in his life has been his woman in Boston, who offers little compensation for the loss of Biff's love. Or while arguing madly with Ben, Willy may be talking to himself, trying to justify death as the only escape from his chosen yet failed way of life. □

DESIGN AND DECORATION

By MARSHAL MIRO

The reviewer is art critic of the
Detroit Free Press.

IT'S been 59 years since philanthropist George Booth began building his dream of an arts community in the rolling farmland near Detroit, Michigan. It's been 34 years since Eliel Saarinen, master architect and first president of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, died. It's been 23 years since the death of his son, architect-designer Eero Saarinen.

Although the importance and beauty of Cranbrook have long been felt by the talented artists who lived and learnt there, Cranbrook has never been much understood by outsiders. But its time has finally come. The implications of all that went on there during the Saarinen years and all that was produced then are being seriously studied by art and design scholars.

The first evidence of that attention is "Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision, 1925-1950," an exhibition which opened at the Detroit Institute of Arts and moved to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Helsinki Museum in Finland (Saarinen's native land), the Decorative Arts Museum of the Louvre in Paris, and is scheduled for the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in 1985. The exhibit of some 200 objects includes elements of Cranbrook itself—like the actual gates to part of the school and furniture from a cafeteria and Saarinen's house—as well as work designed by Cranbrook professors and students during those years.

For the exhibition catalog, the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Metropolitan Museum assembled a team of national scholars to trace, for the first time, the history of the academy. They follow Booth's decision to found an arts community in what was then a virtual wilderness near Detroit, assess the arrival of Eliel and Eero Saarinen and their philosophy, then look at each academy department—architecture, design, metalwork, textiles, ceramics, painting and sculpture—to explain what went on during the Saarinen years.

"All the scholars together decided on the title," explained Davira Taragin, acting curator of modern art at the Detroit Institute. "It refers to the Cranbrook contribution. Basically, the people who came out of Cranbrook at that time defined design in America at mid-century, and their style continues to influence our lives today. That's one of the wonders of the show."

Major portions of the catalog are devoted to studying the influence of Eliel and Eero Saarinen. Scholar David De Long in his essay doesn't quite

give Eliel the genius marks he gives his son Eero. "(Eliel's) achievement was more a matter of sustained quality and of creatively adapted details than bold innovation," De Long says.

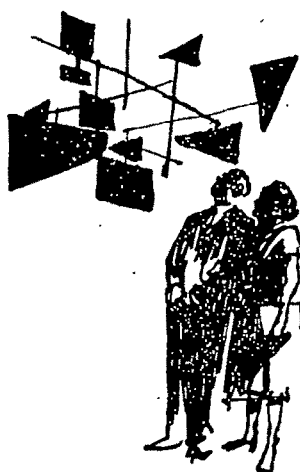
Eero, on the other hand, was influential because of his innovative approach to architecture, says De Long. The designer of such landmarks as General Motors's Tech Center near Detroit, the CBS building in New York and the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, the younger Saarinen developed a theme that would exemplify the use of the building. At New York's Kennedy Airport, for example, he designed a structure that has the feeling of flight.

With the perspective of time, other authors of the exhibition catalog see Eliel Saarinen's superb ornamented chairs as a beginning of modern design. Eero Saarinen's prophetic womb chairs

and pedestal tables alongside his Cranbrook partner Charles Eames's lounge chair and zebra-covered molded plywood chair are considered great modern classics.

Add to these works Edmund Bacon's schemes for a more humane city, Harry Bertoia's wire metal furniture and sound sculpture, Jack Lenor Larsen's modern versions of traditional fabrics, Florence Knoll's red, yellow and blue rooms for Knoll Furniture, Maija Grotell's superbly proportioned clay vases that look like sculpture. These make it easy to understand why the scholars decided to call the Saarinen years "Design in America." Without the input of Cranbrook, architecture, furniture, fiber and clay art in America would have been very different.

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THE AMERICAN BULLETIN

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LOOKING AT LABOR UNIONS

RICHARD B. FREEMAN and JAMES L. MEDOFF
A Current Portrait

BARBARA MEYER WERTHEIMER
Women in the Labor Force

HY KORNBLIHH
Prospects for Worker Participation

DAVID WEBSTER
The Era of Direct Broadcast Satellites

JAMES GLEICK
The Riddle of Chaos

ALLAN O. PFNISTER
The Liberal Arts College: A Continuing Debate

CHRISTOPHER JENCKS
The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

HILTON KRAMER
MOMA: Touchstone of Taste

NORMAN SIMS
The Literary Journalists



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THE AMERICAN REVIEW

Summer 1985

Vol. 29 No. 4

RICHARD B. FREEMAN and
JAMES L. MEDOFF 3

BARBARA MEYER
WERTHEIMER 13

HY KORNBLOH 19

DAVID WEBSTER 25

JAMES GLEICK 34

ALLAN O. PFISTER 44

CHRISTOPHER JENCKS 52

HILTON KRAMER 63

NORMAN SIMS 72

JOHN MCPHEE 82

THOMAS C. SCHELLING 86

DOUGLAS CRASE 96

T. J. JACKSON LEARS 99

NAOMI BLIVEN 100

JACK D. KIRWAN 103

JOSEPH M. McSHANE 104

JOSEPH E. ILLICK 105

ADAM MYERSON 107

LEE DEMBART 110

special section

LOOKING AT LABOR UNIONS

A Current Portrait

Women in the Labor Force

Prospects for Worker Participation

* * *

The Era of Direct Broadcast Satellites

The Riddle of Chaos

The Liberal Arts College:
A Continuing Debate

The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

MOMA: Touchstone of Taste

The Literary Journalists

An Excerpt from "Game Warden"

Economic Reasoning and Ethics

REVIEWS

Language Cresting Like a Wave

The Epitome of Self-Restraint

Collisions and Cooperations

Making New Things Happen

Perpetual Pilgrims

Sculpture in Steel and Concrete

Choreographer of Conservatism

Astronomers at Work

A NOTE TO THE READER

TRADITIONALLY the first Monday in September is observed as Labor Day in America. Commemorating the event, the special section of this issue of *The American Review* takes a timely look at the American labor scene of the 1980s.

Many observers agree that American labor unions have reached a crossroads. Faced with slower growth in membership, confronting the threat of job losses through automation and foreign competition, and often criticized as a special interest that raises wages at the expense of the public, union leaders are seeking to shape a new role for organized labor in the changing workplace of the 1980s. In the opening essay, excerpted from their recent book, *What Do Unions Do?*, labor economists Richard Freeman and James Medoff examine the role trade unionism plays in American society today, and conclude that unions are "a plus on the overall social balance sheet." The second essay, by labor educator Barbara Meyer Wertheimer, sketches how the increasing infusion of women into the American work force is raising a new set of issues for unions to take up with management. In the concluding essay, labor-relations expert Hy Kornbluh discusses another current trend—the movement toward giving workers more decisionmaking authority on their job—and examines both the promise and the problems posed by this "quality of work life" movement.

The rest of the issue covers a variety of topics: David Webster outlines recent developments in direct television broadcasting by satellites; James Gleick explores the new scientific discipline, nicknamed chaos, which seeks to find an order in the "random disorder that seems to exist everywhere in nature"; Allan O. Pfnister continues the debate on the small liberal arts college; Christopher Jencks explains and analyzes the growing economic well-being of the American family in the 1970s; Hilton Kramer narrates "MOMA's (the Museum of Modern Art's) continuing role as a pantheon of modernism"; Thomas C. Schelling illustrates how the ethical questions of public policy can often be clarified through economic reasoning; and Norman Sims discusses the new literary movement which he terms "literary journalism." An excerpt by literary journalist John McPhee follows Sims' article.

The books reviewed include: *A Wave* by John Ashbery; *Cincinnatus: George Washington and the Enlightenment* by Garry Wills; *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* by Jane Jacobs; *Three Degrees Above Zero: Bell Labs in the Information Age* by Jeremy Bernstein; *Pilgrims in Their Own Land: 500 Years of Religion in America* by Martin E. Marty; *The Tower and the Bridge: The Art of Structural Engineering* by David P. Billington; *The Rise of the Right* by William A. Rusher; and *Frozen Star: Of Pulsars, Black Holes and the Fate of Stars* by George Greenstein.

—J.A.M.

A Current Portrait

By RICHARD B. FREEMAN and JAMES L. MEDOFF

Analyzing newly available data, labor economists Richard Freeman and James Medoff describe how unions affect such matters as productivity and wage distribution, and conclude that unions are "a plus on the overall social balance sheet." Both writers teach economics at Harvard University, and are also affiliated with the National Bureau of Economic Research, where Freeman is director of labor research.

TRADER unions are the principal institution of workers in modern capitalistic societies. For over 200 years, since the days of Adam Smith, economists and other social scientists, labor unionists and business leaders have debated the social effects of unionism. Despite the long debate, however, no agreed-upon answer has emerged to the question: what do unions do?

On the one side, many economists view unions largely as monopolies in the labor market whose primary economic impact is to raise members' wages at the expense of unorganized labor and of the efficient functioning of the economy. These analysts stress the adverse effects of union work rules on productivity, the loss of employment in the organized sector due to union wage effects and the consequent crowding of the nonunion sector with displaced workers. Consistent with this view, managers frequently complain about inflexible operations and work disruptions due to unions, while many social critics paint unions as socially unresponsive, elitist, nondemocratic and crime-riddled institutions.

On the other side are those who believe unions have beneficial economic and political effects. Industrial-relations experts have long stressed the ways in which collective bargaining can induce better management and higher productivity. These specialists note that unions can increase the development and retention of skills, provide information about what occurs on the shop floor, improve morale and pressure management to be more efficient in its operations. Unionists point out that in addition to increasing wages, unions provide workers both with protection against arbitrary management decisions and with a voice at the workplace and in the political arena. Even the managements of some organized companies have cited positive impacts of unions on their business. Consider, for example, this statement by Thomas Murphy, then chairman of General Motors:

The United Auto Workers may have introduced the sit-down strike to America, but in its relationship with GM management it has also helped introduce . . . mutually beneficial cooperation . . . What comes to my mind is the progress we have made, by working together, in such directions as providing greater safety and health protection, in decreasing alcoholism and drug addiction, in improving the quality of work life.

From *What Do Unions Do?* by Richard B. Freeman and James L. Medoff.

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The American Review

During the past quarter century, however, the negative view of trade unions has become increasingly dominant. While there are notable exceptions, many on both the Right and Left now doubt the social relevance and value of America's organized labor movement. The widespread picture of U.S. unions today is of institutions adept at advancing their own interests at the public's expense. Economists concerned with quantifying the economic effects of collective bargaining have focused almost exclusively on the monopoly wage impact of unions, developing a large and valuable literature on the differences in wages paid to organized and unorganized labor. Because monopolistic wage increases are socially harmful, most economic studies, implicitly or explicitly, have judged unions as being a negative force in society.

It was a shortage of statistical evidence concerning what unions do beyond raising wages that set the stage for the research reported here. The recent availability of computerized data files, which contain vast amounts of information on thousands of individuals, establishments and companies, offers the opportunity for quantitative analyses of many of the non-wage effects of trade unions and provides a new picture of the impact of unions on the economy and on the broader society.

The meaning of the results of this study of U.S. trade unionism can best be understood by recognizing that unions have two faces, each of which leads to a different view of the institution: a *monopoly* face and a *collective voice/institutional response* face. Most, if not all, unions have monopoly power, which they can use to raise wages above competitive levels. Assuming that the competitive system works perfectly, these wage increases have harmful economic effects. The analysis of unions as monopolies focuses on the magnitude of the union markup of wages and traces the ways in which this markup causes firms to lower employment and output, thereby harming economic efficiency and altering the distribution of income.

Despite the attention economists give to the monopoly face of unionism, analysis of union monopoly behavior is much less fully developed than is the analysis of monopolistic enterprises. The principal reason is that unions are not the simple monopolies of economics textbooks but rather collective organizations of workers with diverse interests. Unlike the monopoly firm that sets prices to maximize profits, unions rarely set wages; they bargain over wages with employers. Unless one believes that the process of collective bargaining is a sham, the wages obtained by unions must be viewed as the joint responsibility of management and labor: the stronger management resistance to union wage goals is, the smaller union wage gains will be. Moreover, unions' ability to raise wages is limited by the fact that, all else the same, higher union wages will induce employers to reduce employment. Some members gain when wages are very high; others lose.

There is, however, another way of analyzing unions effects. As Harvard economist Albert Hirschman pointed out in his important book *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*, societies have two basic mechanisms for dealing with social or economic problems. The first is the classic market mechanism of exit-and-entry, in which individuals respond to a divergence between desired and actual social conditions by exercising freedom of choice or mobility: the dissatisfied consumer switches

products; the diner whose soup is too salty seeks another restaurant; the unhappy couple divorces. In the labor market, exit is synonymous with quitting, while entry consists of new hires by the firm. By leaving less desirable for more desirable jobs, or by refusing bad jobs, individuals penalize the bad employer and reward the good, leading to an overall improvement in the efficiency of the economic system. As long as the exit-entry market mechanism is viewed as the only adjustment mechanism, institutions like unions are invariably seen as impediments to the optimal operation of the economy.

The second mode of adjustment is the political mechanism that Hirschman termed "voice." Voice refers to the use of direct communication to bring actual and desired conditions closer together. It means talking about problems: complaining to the store about a poor product rather than taking business elsewhere; telling the chef that the soup had too much salt; discussing marital problems rather than going directly to the divorce court. In the job market, voice means discussing with an employer conditions that ought to be changed, rather than quitting the job. In modern industrial economies, and particularly in large enterprises, a trade union is the vehicle for collective voice—for providing workers as a group with a means of communicating with management.

Collective rather than individual bargaining with an employer is necessary for effective voice at the workplace for two reasons. First, many important aspects of an industrial setting are "public goods," that is, goods which will affect every employee in such a way that one individual's partaking of the good does not preclude someone else from doing so. Safety conditions, lighting, heating, the speed of the production line, the firm's formal grievance procedure, pension plan and policies on matters such as layoffs, worksharing, cyclical wage adjustment and promotion all obviously affect the entire work force in the same way that defense, sanitation and fire protection affect the community at large. One of the most important economic theorems is that competitive markets will not provide enough of such goods; some form of collective decision making is needed. Without a collective organization, the incentive for the individual to take into account the effects of his or her actions on others, or to express his or her preferences, or to invest time and money in changing conditions, is likely to be too small to spur action. Why not "let Harry do it" and enjoy the benefits at no cost?

A second reason why collective action is necessary is that workers who are tied to a firm are unlikely to reveal their true preferences to an employer, for fear the employer may fire them. In a world in which workers could find employment at the same wages immediately, the market would offer adequate protection for the individual, but that is not the world we live in. The danger of job loss makes expression of voice by an individual risky. Collective voice, by contrast, is protected both by the support of all workers and by U.S. labor law: "It shall be an unfair labor practice for an employer by discrimination in regard to hire or tenure or employment or any term or condition of employment to encourage or discourage membership in any labor organization" (National Labor Relations Act, 1935). Court interpretation of this law makes a sharp distinction between collective and individual actions at the workplace. Even nonunion workers acting in a concerted fashion are protected from managerial retaliation; however,

The American Review

the nonunion protester acting alone and not seeking a union is "terminable at will" and must speak very carefully.

The collective nature of trade unionism fundamentally alters the operation of a labor market and, hence, the nature of the labor contract. In a nonunion setting, where exit-and-entry is the predominant form of adjustment, the signals and incentives to firms depend on the preferences of the "marginal" worker, the one who might leave because of small changes in the conditions of employment. The firm responds primarily to the needs of this marginal worker, who is generally young and marketable; the firm can to a considerable extent ignore the preferences of typically older, less marketable workers, who—for reasons of skill, knowledge, rights that cannot be readily transferred to other enterprises, as well as because of other costs associated with changing firms—are effectively immobile. In a unionized setting, by contrast, the union takes account of *all* workers in determining its demands at the bargaining table, so that the desires of workers who are highly unlikely to leave the enterprise are also represented.

In a modern economy, where workers tend to be attached to firms for many years, younger and older workers are likely to have different preferences (for instance, regarding pension or health-insurance plans versus take-home pay). The change from an approach that focuses only on workers at the coming-or-going margin to one that considers all employees is likely to lead to a very different labor contract. Under some conditions, a union contract can be economically more efficient than the contract that would result in the absence of unions.

Finally, as a collective voice unions fundamentally alter the social relations of the workplace. The essence of the employment relationship under capitalism is the payment of money by the employer to the employee in return for the employer's control over a certain amount of the employee's time. The employer seeks to use his employee's time in a way that maximizes the profitability of the enterprise. As a result, the way in which the time purchased is utilized must be determined by some interaction between workers and their employer. In the absence of unionism, the worker has limited responses to orders that he feels are unfair: the worker can quit, or he can perhaps engage in quiet sabotage or shirking, neither of which is likely to alter the employer's actions. In the union setting, by contrast, the union constitutes a source of worker power, diluting managerial authority and offering members protection through both the "industrial jurisprudence" system, under which many workplace decisions are based on rules (such as seniority) instead of supervisory judgment or whim, and the grievance and arbitration system, under which disputes over proper managerial decision making on work issues can be resolved. As a result, management power within enterprises is curtailed by unionism, so that workers' rights are likely to be better enforced.

The two views of unionism lead to fundamentally different analyses of what management does in response to the existence of a union. In the most basic monopoly analysis, in which unions can simply raise wages, management's responses are limited. It can reduce employment, substitute capital for labor or hire more skilled workers to raise labor's productivity. Since management is assumed to be doing everything just right in the absence of unions, these adjustments are socially harmful.

By contrast, the voice/response face directs attention to the possibility that because of incomplete information, lack of coordination in an enterprise and organizational slack, management can respond to unionism in more creative ways, which may be socially beneficial. This view is consistent with modern theories of the firm, in which management is taken to be not a simple all-knowing profit-maximizer, but rather a mediator of the interests of relatively permanent employees, stockholders and consumers. The greater the imperfection of markets, and the further real-world management is from a computer programmed by Adam Smith's "invisible hand," the greater are the possibilities for management's response to unions to improve the operation of the economy.

If management uses the collective bargaining process to learn about and improve the operation of the workplace and the production process, unionism can be a significant plus to enterprise efficiency. On the other hand, if management responds negatively to collective bargaining (or is prevented by unions from reacting positively), unionism can significantly harm the performance of the firm. If management acquiesces to exorbitant union wage demands, the organized sector may suffer serious economic decline. If it reaches sensible agreements with labor, all parties may benefit. The important point is that just as there are two sides to all markets, demand and supply, there are also two sides to all collective bargaining arrangements, management and unions.

How one perceives the monopoly and voice/response faces of unionism affects three major economic outcomes: the level and composition of national output (efficiency); the distribution of income; and the extent of economic equality and political freedom. And on each of the issues there has been considerable debate over which face is dominant.

As monopoly institutions, unions reduce society's output in three ways. First, union-won wage increases cause a misallocation of resources by inducing organized firms to hire fewer workers, to use more capital per worker and to hire workers of higher quality than is socially optimal. Second, strikes called to force management to accept union demands reduce gross national product. Third, union contract provisions—such as limits on the loads that can be handled by workers, restrictions on tasks performed—lower the productivity of labor and capital.

By contrast, the voice/response face of unionism suggests important ways in which unionism can raise productivity. First of all, voice at a workplace should reduce the rate of quitting. Since lower quit rates imply lower hiring and training costs and less disruption in the functioning of work groups, they should raise productivity. In addition, the likelihood that workers and firms will remain together for long periods of time should increase the incentive for investment in skills specific to an enterprise, which also raises productivity.

The fact that senior workers are likely to be relatively more powerful in unionized firms points to another way in which unions can raise productivity. Under unionism, promotions and other rewards tend to depend less on individual performance and more on length of service. As a result, feelings of rivalry among individuals are likely to be less pronounced in union plants than in non-union plants, and the amount of informal training and assistance that workers are willing to provide one another is greater. On the other hand, however, a

The American Review

greater reliance on seniority in determining who gets jobs can reduce productivity by placing individuals in jobs for which they are less qualified than other workers. Which of these effects dominates is an empirical question.

Unionism can also improve efficiency by putting pressure on management to tighten job-production standards and accountability in order to preserve profits in the face of higher wages. Because unionized management can be challenged by the union, moreover, it will tend to discard vague, paternalistic, authoritarian personnel policies in favor of practices in which explicit rules govern behavior. After making comprehensive case studies of management in over 100 unionized firms for their 1960 book *The Impact of Collective Bargaining on Management*, economists Sumner H. Slichter, James J. Healy and E. Robert Livernash concluded: "The challenge that unions presented to management has, if viewed broadly, created superior and better balanced management, even though some exceptions must be recognized."

Finally, through the voice/response mechanism, the collective bargaining apparatus opens an important communication channel between workers and management, one likely to increase the flow of information between the two and improve the productivity of the enterprise. As Yale economist Lloyd Reynolds has observed, "Unions can do valuable work by pointing out improvements that perhaps should have been obvious to management but were not, and that, once discovered, can be installed with a net gain to the company as well as the workers."

One of the most striking implications of the analysis of the monopoly face of unions, greatly stressed by opponents of unionism, is that union wage gains increase inequality in the labor market. According to the monopoly argument, the workers displaced from unionized firms as a result of union wage gains raise the supply of labor to nonunion firms, which can therefore be expected to reduce wages. Thus, unionized workers are likely to be made better off at the expense of nonunion workers. The fact that organized blue-collar workers who are more skilled would be higher paid than other blue-collar workers even in the absence of unionism implies further that unionism benefits "labor's elite" at the expense of those with less skill and earning power. Since many people have supported unions in the belief that they reduce economic inequality, evidence that unions have the opposite effect would be a strong argument against the union movement.

The voice/response face suggests very different effects. Given that union decisions are based on a political process in which the majority rules, and given that the majority of workers are likely to have earnings below average in any workplace, unions can be expected to seek to reduce wage inequality within firms. Furthermore, union members are also likely to favor a less dispersed distribution of earnings for reasons of ideology and organizational solidarity. Finally, to reduce managerial discretion in the wage-setting process, unions seek equal pay for workers in the same job rather than pay according to the manager's perception of individual merit.

The monopoly critique of unions as social organizations is harsh. It holds that much of union monopoly power arises from the coercive and potentially violent acts of union activists to disrupt production through strikes and related activity. Some claim that the essence of union monopoly power is the power of

forcefully preventing nonunion workers from obtaining jobs at organized plants and of coercing workers to join in strikes. Monopoly power is also said to foster corruption and undemocratic behavior and to lead to high dues or entry fees, so that the dominant faction in the union reaps the rewards of the union's market power. In addition, it is believed that unions use their control over the supply of labor to extort funds from firms—especially small, weak ones. In the political sphere, unions reveal their monopoly face through efforts to obtain special-interest legislation that strengthens union power to extract monopoly gains. The prime lobbying activity of unions, often in alliance with business, is to obtain governmental regulations that restrict competition and raise prices and wages for a particular sector, at the expense of consumers.

The voice/response view is that unions are democratic institutions operating on behalf of their members and that their political activities are part-and-parcel of modern democratic states. Unions are expected to be democratic because they require the approval of a majority of workers, who elect the leadership and determine policy through conventions, referenda or change of leadership. In the United States, both union constitutions and the law require unions to operate under democratic rules. The union is often said to represent its "median" member, since in a political organization the views of the median person will, under some circumstances, dominate. Within the political sphere, unions are viewed as representing the general working population, devoting much political muscle to promoting legislation that would be of no more material gain to unionized workers than to other workers. For instance, organized labor was active in pushing for the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, equal-employment-opportunity legislation, antipoverty legislation and the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1971. It is argued that though unions fight for self-interest legislation—as do other groups in America's pluralistic society—they have scored their greatest political victories on more general social legislation and thus are more effective as a voice of the whole working population and the disadvantaged than as a vehicle for increasing the power of a monopoly institution.

Since, in fact, unions have both a monopoly and a voice/response face, the key questions for understanding the impact of private-sector unionism in the United States relate to the relative importance of each. Are unions primarily monopolistic institutions, or are they primarily voice institutions that induce socially beneficial responses? What emphasis should be given to these two disparate faces to obtain a realistic portrait of the role trade unionism plays in American society?

To answer these questions, we have studied a wide variety of data that distinguish between union and nonunion establishments and between union and nonunion workers, and we have interviewed representatives of management, labor officials and industrial-relations experts. Although additional study will certainly alter some of the specifics, we believe that the results of our analysis provide a reasonably clear and accurate picture of what unions do—a picture that stands in sharp contrast to the negative view that unions do little more than win monopoly wage gains for their members.

Our most far-reaching conclusion is that in addition to well-advertised effects on wages, unions alter nearly every other measurable aspect of the operation of

The American Review

workplaces and enterprises, from turnover to productivity to profitability to the composition of pay packages. The behavior of workers and firms and the outcomes of their interactions differ substantially between the organized and unorganized sectors. On balance, unionization appears to improve rather than to harm the social and economic system. Analysis shows that unions are associated with greater efficiency in most settings, reduce overall earnings inequality and contribute to, rather than detract from, economic and political freedom. This is not to deny the negative monopoly effects of unions. They exist. They are undesirable. But they are not the only ways in which unions affect the society. Our analysis indicates that, in fact, focusing on them leads to an exceedingly inaccurate representation of what unions do. In the United States in the period we have studied, the voice/response face of unions dominates the monopoly face, though we stress that an accurate portrait must show both faces.

Following is a capsule summary of the more specific findings that underlie this broad conclusion:

1. On the wage side, unions have a substantial monopoly wage impact, but there is no single union/nonunion wage differential. The union wage effect is greater for less educated than more educated workers, for younger than for prime-age workers and for junior than for senior workers, and it is greater in heavily organized industries and in regulated industries than in others. Most important, the social costs of the monopoly wage gains of unionism appear to be relatively modest, on the order of .3 percent or less of gross national product.

2. In addition to raising wages, unions alter the entire package of compensation, substantially increasing the proportion of compensation allotted to fringe benefits, particularly to deferred benefits such as pensions and life, accident and health insurance, which are favored by older workers. These changes are, on balance, to be viewed as a social plus.

3. The claim that unions increase wage inequality is not true. It is true that unions raise the wages of organized blue-collar workers relative to the wages of unorganized blue-collar workers, and thus increase that aspect of inequality. But they also raise blue-collar earnings relative to the higher white-collar earnings, thus reducing inequality between those groups. Moreover, by adopting pay-policies that limit managerial discretion in wage-setting, they reduce inequality among workers in the same establishments and among different establishments. Quantitatively, the inequality-reducing effects of unionism outweigh the inequality-increasing effects, so that on balance unions are a force for equality in the distribution of wages among individual workers.

4. By providing workers with a voice in determining rules and conditions of work, by instituting grievance and arbitration procedures for appealing supervisors' decisions and by negotiating seniority clauses desired by workers, unionism greatly reduces the probability that workers will quit their jobs. As a result, unionized work forces are more stable than nonunion work forces paid the same compensation.

5. Unionism alters the way in which firms respond to swings in the economy. In cyclical downturns, unionized firms make more use of temporary layoffs and less use of cuts in wage growth than do nonunion firms, while in cyclical upturns, unionized firms recall relatively more workers and nonunion firms tend to

hire new employees. In a decline that threatens the jobs of senior employees, unions negotiate wage and work-rule concessions of substantial magnitude.

6. Union workplaces operate under rules that are both different from and more explicit than nonunion workplaces. Seniority is more important in union settings, with unionized senior workers obtaining relatively greater protection against job loss and relatively greater chance of promotion than nonunion senior workers. In addition, management in union companies generally operates more "by the book," with less subjectivity and also less flexibility, than does management in nonunion companies, and in more professional, less paternalistic or authoritarian ways.

7. Some nonunion workers, namely those in large firms that are trying to avoid unions through "positive labor relations," obtain higher wages and better working conditions as a result of the existence of trade unions. The average employed nonunion blue-collar worker may enjoy a slight increase in well-being because the threat of unionism forces his or her firm to offer better wages and work conditions, but the average white-collar worker appears essentially unaffected by the existence of blue-collar unionization. Some workers, however, may suffer from greater joblessness as a result of higher union wages in their city or their industry.

8. Paradoxically, while unionized workers are less willing to leave their employers than nonunion workers, unionized workers often report themselves less satisfied with their jobs than nonunion workers. Unionists are especially dissatisfied with their work conditions and their relations with supervisors. One explanation is that unions galvanize worker discontent in order to make a strong case in negotiations with management. To be effective, voice must be heard.

9. The view of unions as a major deterrent to productivity is erroneous. In many sectors, unionized establishments are more productive than nonunion establishments, while in only a few are they less productive. The higher productivity is due in part to the lower rate of turnover under unionism, improved managerial performance in response to the union challenge and generally cooperative labor-management relations at the plant level. When labor-management relations are bad, so too is productivity in organized plants.

10. Unionized employers tend to earn a lower rate of return per dollar of capital than do nonunion employers. The return is lower under unionism because the increase in wages and the greater amount of capital used per worker are not compensated for by the higher productivity of labor associated with unionism. The reduction in profitability, however, is centered in highly concentrated and otherwise highly profitable sectors of the economy.

11. Unions have had mixed success in the political arena. Legislators representing highly unionized districts or receiving considerable union campaign support tend to support unions' goals in the Congress, but legislators representing less unionized districts or receiving more support from business and other interest groups often oppose union goals. In the important area of major labor legislation, bills opposed by unions have been enacted while bills favored by unions have been voted down. In general unions have managed to *preserve* laws augmenting monopoly powers in specific sectors but have not been able to use the law to *expand* their monopoly power. Most union political successes have

The American Review

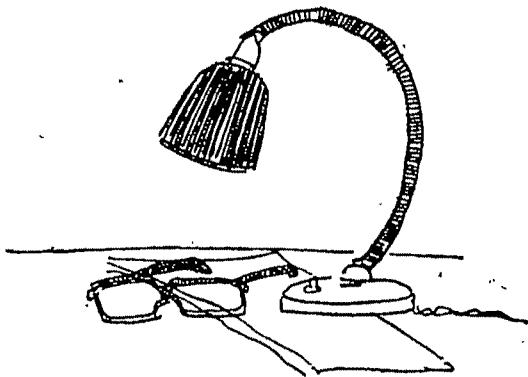
come in the areas of general labor and social goals that benefit workers as a whole rather than unionists alone.

12. The picture of unions as nondemocratic institutions run by corrupt labor bosses is a myth. Most unions are highly democratic, with members having access to union decision-making machinery, especially at the local level, and instances of corruption exist only in a few unions.

13. The percentage of the U.S. private-sector work force that is in trade unions has declined precipitously since the mid-1950s. The decline is due largely to a dramatic increase in the amount and sophistication of both legal and illegal company actions designed to forestall the organization of workers, and reduced union organizing activity per nonunion worker.

While our research suggests that unionism generally serves as a force for social and economic good, it has also found that unions benefit labor at the expense of capital. Unions reduce the profitability of organized firms, particularly those in concentrated sectors where profits are abnormally high. In addition, while some nonunion workers lose from unionism, investigations indicate that many nonunion workers, especially those in large firms, benefit from the threat of organizing and from the information about workers' desires that comes from unionism.

The paradox of American unionism, then, is that it is at one and the same time a plus on the overall social balance sheet (in most though not all circumstances) and a minus on the corporate balance sheet (again, in most though not all circumstances). We believe that this paradox underlies the national ambivalence toward unions. □



Women in the Labor Force

By BARBARA MAYER WERTHEIMER

As women enter the job market in increasing numbers, they are coming to assume a greater leadership role in labor unions and forcing increasing consideration by unions—and management—of issues like child care, pay equity and continuing education, which are of particular concern to working women. Barbara Mayer Wertheimer, who died shortly after completing this essay, was a professor of labor and industrial relations at Cornell University and the director of the university's Institute on Women and Work. Her books include *We Were There: The Story of Working Women in America* (1977) and *Labor Education for Women Workers* (1981).

ON a November day in 1909, 20,000 New York garment workers, almost all of them women, left their factory lofts and began a strike that was to last 13 weeks. Known as the "Uprising of the 20,000," it strengthened the foundation for the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), which is still the major labor organization in the women's garment industry. Only a few months later, a similar eruption in Chicago, begun with a walkout by women in the men's clothing industry over a wage cut, set in place the other U.S. garment union, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (later, the ACTWU). Although women's efforts created these unions, whose membership continues to be 75-80 percent female, the key leadership has been made up of men, and this is true of the U.S. labor movement in general.

What is the role of women in the American labor movement today? Close to 80 percent of all women are clustered in about 20 of the 420 occupational classifications listed by the U.S. Department of Labor. About 73 percent are in sales, clerical, service and operative jobs. These areas of women's employment include major growth sectors of the economy—all predominantly white-collar and clerical occupations that provide entry-level, semiskilled jobs.

Three out of every five new workers in the '70s were women—12 million women to 8 million men. They have entered not only the traditional women's jobs, but also many nontraditional fields, such as coal mining, carpentry and plumbing, though at a considerably lower rate. The most startling increase has been in the labor force participation of married women, 55.4 percent of whom were employed in 1978.

Today women are found in more unions than ever before. They make up at least half of the membership in 39 national unions and associations, while the

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The American Review

number of unions with no women members is down from 39 in 1972 to 18 in 1978. Nevertheless, the clustering of women in sex-stereotyped jobs is paralleled by the concentration of two of every five women union members into just seven unions and major associations.

The rapid growth during the '70s of unions in the public sector has brought hundreds of thousands of women into the labor movement, many for the first time. The four largest public-sector unions have high proportions of women members: the National Education Association, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the American Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Government Employees. Women in the public sector are responsible, in the main, for the increase in the number of women unionists from 2.9 million to 6.9 million between 1954 and 1978.

How have unions responded to the increasing numbers of women members? A.H. Raskin, the dean of labor journalists, believes that "in organizing and advancement of standing, unions will do more for women than for men in the next decade." Nonetheless, though women make up 28.1 percent of all members of labor unions and employee associations, they hold none of the top offices and at best they make up a small minority of the key executive board members.

The reasons for these low levels of participation are complex. Labor unions are overwhelmingly national in structure, with regional and local unions serving as the main links to rank-and-file members. Policy is set nationally by an executive board and carried out by the organization's key elected officers. No figures are available on how many women hold local union posts in the United States. On the local and regional levels, however, unions with large numbers of women members are more than likely to have women staff representatives handling grievances, conducting educational programs and organizing. Where the local union is predominantly female, so, usually, are the rank-and-file leaders. Where elected officers of local unions hold full-time, paid positions off the shop floor, they tend to be male, especially in the mass-production industries, where men predominate in the work force. Women are more likely to hold offices that are volunteer and unpaid. Elections for paid officerships are highly contested, require elaborate campaigns and take both time and political experience.

Research suggests that workers in high-status jobs (more often men) are more likely to hold union office than workers in low-status jobs (more often women). Moreover, a man interested in union office learns political and administrative skills as a young union member during the very years when women tend to be home, bearing and raising children. When women re-enter the work force, they find themselves at a disadvantage, not only because of the double burden of job and home, but because they lack the experience and organizing skills, and often the self-confidence, to try for leadership posts. In effect, women who seek to play an active leadership role in their unions must often accept what one calls the "triple day" to combine workplace, home and union career.

Some of the younger union leaders find the low participation rates among their women members a source of embarrassment. Attitudes have begun to change. Some unions are sponsoring labor education that helps women members to bridge their experiential gap and to encourage their increased involvement and participation in union affairs. Several national unions have moved to increase

Women in the Labor Force

the number of women on their national boards and staffs. To no small degree this is a consequence of the new militancy of women in the rank-and-file, such as those in the ILGWU and the American Postal Workers Union, who at their union conventions have introduced resolutions to increase the number of women in leadership positions and organized to ensure their adoption. It also shows the impact of a new national organization, the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW).

Founded in 1974 at a convention that brought together 3200 union women from almost every state, CLUW adopted four goals: to move women up on the job and in the union; to achieve the passage of legislation to improve the status and condition of working women; to engage in political action and support more women for public office; and to organize unorganized women workers.

In 1983 over 72 chapters of CLUW operated in U.S. cities, providing a network of union women that cuts across union and association lines. Participation affords union women practical experience in running for office, lobbying and developing strategy. Behind the organization is a group of experienced, dedicated women union leaders who saw that the time was ripe for mobilizing women's growing strength, and helping women advance in their own unions. The spirit of change was in the air.

CLUW has been able to channel the energies and actions of its members by operating within established union structures. Its structure parallels that of a large national union. At the top is a representative governing board to which elected CLUW officers are responsible. Carefully outlined procedures govern its chapter activities. In this way CLUW seeks to influence the policies of both national unions and the AFL-CIO, the umbrella coalition of most American labor unions, on women's issues and concerns. Some of the areas in which it has heightened union consciousness include the need for pay equity (that is, equal pay for work of comparable worth), paid maternity leave, improved health and safety for all workers without penalizing women of childbearing age, and passage of an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution. To remedy the dearth of women in union leadership posts, CLUW has applied pressure from the top while developing the ability of its members, as active participants in their own unions, to apply pressure from below.

Further evidence that change is in the air came when two women were appointed to key posts on the AFL-CIO staff, and in 1980 Joyce Miller, president of CLUW and a vice-president of the ACTWU, became the first woman to sit on the AFL-CIO executive council. At the AFL-CIO convention the next year, a second woman, Barbara Hutchinson, was elected to the executive council.

This rising consciousness is in part accounted for by the increasing interest in education programs for union women. These are sponsored by university and college labor education centers as well as by unions themselves. In the United States close to 50 universities and colleges offer labor education at modest cost to union members. In 1972 the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations of Cornell University became the first such institution to establish education and leadership training programs especially for trade-union women. The program begun that year has grown into the Institute for Women and Work, offering labor studies, leadership training and career development courses for

The American Review

union and other working women throughout New York State.

Increasingly, national unions are establishing departments of women's affairs or activities (a few unions have had such departments for 20 years or more). They aim through conferences and publications to develop women staff members, encourage the establishment of women's committees in local unions and train women to move into local bargaining and grievance committees.

Several unions have pioneered in bringing to the forefront issues of concern to women, filing court cases on sex discrimination in wages, hiring and upgrading. The Communications Workers of America in recent contract negotiations has won higher increases for lower paid workers (mostly women) and a reduction in the number of job classifications so as to reduce some wide pay inequities. The 1980 contract between the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 12, and the U.S. Department of Labor includes the use of paid vacation time—as well as leave without pay for up to two years—for child care by male or female workers; flexible work schedules for a minimum of 60 percent of employees; a commitment to fill at least 10 percent of all openings by internal upward mobility; guarantees of an environment free of sexual harassment; and the right of parties to the agreement to bargain over the impact of new technology, with necessary training for affected workers.

A major force exerting pressures on women and minority workers in the 1980s is the technological revolution. Computer output has increased 10,000 times in the past 15 years, replacing higher cost human power with microprocessors, discs, tapes and chips. The office of tomorrow could be paperless and virtually self-conducting. A marked alteration in the nature of white-collar employment inevitably follows.

The dehumanization that computer technology introduces to the workplace through worker isolation and what some writers have called "the black lung of the technical classes"—that is, stress—will be a challenge to labor organizations as well as to management. It is possible that these issues and such others as retraining, job security and the creative use of leisure will produce new labor union militancy in this sector of the labor force.

The shorter work week is another key issue. For close to half a century, there has been no major work week reduction, except in a few areas such as the garment and construction industries, and in offices, where a work week of 35 to 37.5 hours with paid lunch and coffee breaks has gradually become the norm. To be sure, longer paid vacations and an increase in the number of paid holidays have created a shorter work year. But gains in productivity through the introduction of new technologies are eventually shared with the workers, and a further shortening of the work week is likely. In view of the burden most women carry at home, the benefits to them of a shorter work week are unarguable.

As more women enter the labor force in the 1980s, they will exert pressure on the market for a greater share of the good jobs. Statistics on college and graduate-school attendance confirm this speculation. In 1978 men's enrollment in colleges and universities had increased 16 percent over 1970 figures, but women's was up 56 percent. On the graduate level, women's increase was 103 percent, men's only 21 percent, above 1970. Of all those over 35 who are back in school, women outnumber men two to one. Although working women tend to earn less

than men and large numbers of them are the sole support of their families, thousands are nevertheless assuming tuition and related costs (often including costs of child care) to continue their education.

This back-to-school movement among working adults should lead unions to put considerable emphasis on such benefits as tuition reimbursement and paid released time for retraining and study. In the United States, hourly and lower level salaried workers do not receive paid released time either for union training or for job- or career-related study. Unions may soon negotiate for the funneling of some of the savings from new technology into paid released time for study.

Another issue, child care, cannot be handled effectively by collective bargaining alone. The achievement of comprehensive child care, available to all families desiring it and in the variety of forms required to meet varying family needs, means gaining government support for a broad social policy laid down in statute and implemented with substantial financing. Unions will have to join with many other interest groups to work out the details of such a program and to campaign for its adoption. The need is intense. Today more than eight million children are candidates for preschool child care with fewer than 1.5 million places available.

The issues go beyond child care. They include leaves for both parents in the first months or early years of a child's life, the possibility of shared jobs, variable working hours for men as well as women and recognition that child care is a parental, and not just a maternal, concern. Support for programs to promote maternal and child health is a related question.

The most immediate issue of the '80s is pay equity: the question of how to deal with systemic wage discrimination rooted in the low value society attaches to the work women do. Since for the foreseeable future a majority of women will continue to work in segregated jobs where direct comparison with men's work and wages is impossible, the need in the United States, as in almost every country, is for reevaluation of women's work.

Several unions in the private and public sectors are among the groups supporting the concept of pay equity. In November 1979 the AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention passed a resolution that read in part: "the AFL-CIO [will] treat job inequities resulting from sex and race discrimination like all other inequities which must be corrected, and urge its affiliates to adopt the concept of equal pay for work of comparable value in organizing and in negotiating collective agreements."

In June 1981 the Supreme Court decided that women who are paid less than men may sue their employers, even if their jobs are not substantially like those performed by the men. The case in question involved jail matrons in Oregon whose jobs, when evaluated along with those of male jailers, were set at 90 percent of the worth of the men's but who were nevertheless paid 75 percent of the male rate. They sued their employer, the county government. The Supreme Court, in remanding the case for reconsideration to the district court, instructed it to take a "broad approach to the definition of equal employment opportunity . . . essential to overcoming and undoing the effect of discrimination."

Just a month later the first strike over the issue of pay equity for women took place in San Jose, California, and was won by the local union. The two-year contract that resulted called for management to put up \$1.5 million to help correct

The American Review

pay inequities. The mayor of San Jose, Janet Gray Hayes, said of the agreement that ended the nine-day strike: "This is a first giant step toward fairness in the workplace for women within the severe budget constraints of the city." Several other unions are pursuing the issue of pay equity through collective bargaining, efforts at legislative remedy and litigation.

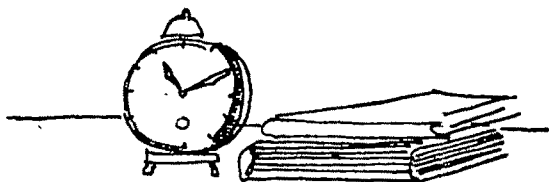
As jobs are revalued upward, women's work status will rise. They can be expected to have heightened self-esteem, which will be reflected in many cases in their realization of their leadership potential in their unions and communities. They can also expect a more equitable relationship with their spouses as they make an increased economic contribution at home. Moreover, as women's jobs pay more, more men can be expected to enter them. A period of adjustment and accommodation must follow, as both men and women choose from a wide range of occupations.

The new and growing unity among women in the labor movement offers hope that they will be able to deal with these critical issues successfully. The sense of unity has been strengthened by the entry of black and Hispanic women into unions at a greater rate than their proportion in the labor force, and their movement into union and CLUW leadership roles.

As a result of women's growing assertiveness, unions in many cases have taken initiatives not only on the equal pay issue, but in opening up job opportunities. Unions have encouraged women to apply for apprenticeships and training programs; they have ensured job posting so that women and minorities can apply for more advantageous positions; they have bargained for plantwide seniority so that, at least in some cases, women and minorities who do move into more skilled jobs are not laid off first when layoffs take place. Unions can be in a position to eliminate discriminatory wage rates and promotion systems.

Women need to do more than develop solidarity among themselves; they must reach the men in their organizations and present women's needs in human terms to forge unity. The French lawyer Simone Veil, while president of the European Parliament, put it this way:

We have to be concerned about the backlash. Men worry and complain that we will take away their jobs, that we will make a recession worse. The system, the concept itself, must be changed so that a woman's job is seen as important as a man's. Legislated equality must broaden to become mental equality. It is an enormous thought, and it is up to each woman to change the minds of the men in her life. □



Prospects for Worker Participation

By HY KORNBLUH

Current U.S. experiments in workplace democracy often appeal to managers and workers alike. Hy Kornbluh discusses the adjustments in management methods required by this rapidly growing movement and examines how some unions are taking a more active role in carrying out worker-participation programs. Kornbluh, who teaches at the University of Michigan, is director of the university's Labor Studies Center, Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations. His present research project involves studying the effects of worker participation on energy conservation in the United States and Japan.

THE idea of increasing workers' participation in decisions affecting how their work is done and the quality of their work life is appearing on the labor-management agenda in forms that present new challenges to unions in organized industries and perhaps even greater challenges in many unorganized workplaces. This thrust has been generated by a complex set of economic, demographic and technological circumstances, changing worker expectations as well as worker and employer motivations. Although this movement may be only a passing fad in many enterprises, it has the potential of playing a longer lasting role in an increasing number of unionized workplaces. The future of these developments will depend on employers' willingness to modify decision-making patterns significantly and, where the union is strong, on labor's assumption of a neutral or active role in the arrangements.

As part of a recent case-study research team, I looked at employee-involvement groups among the production workers in a large midwestern manufacturing plant, particularly those groups undertaking energy-conservation projects. One of the coordinators of the program suggested that we study similar white-collar teams they had formed there. One of these teams had indeed carried through an imaginative, high-savings conservation project. However, after a close look we found that the greater concern of some teams, which were trained in participative problem solving, was to develop work-simplification projects for the blue-collar work force. Such projects are a sophisticated contemporary version of Frederick Taylor's scientific methods of factory management developed in the early years of this century. Ironically, "quality of work life" (QWL) programs in many industries are designed to offset if not the practice then the effects of Tayloristic work rationalization that result in atomized, repetitive, boring

The American Review

jobs designed to minimize worker discretion as much as possible.

These ideas are being introduced under various names and forms, such as quality of work life, quality circles (QC), employee-involvement programs, worker participation, participative management, work reform, work redesign and so forth. Quality circles and quality of work life groups are volunteer groups of usually seven to 12 employees who identify and try to solve problems in the way their work is done. QWLs tend to have a more open agenda than QCs. A more advanced form of participation involves autonomous or semi-autonomous work groups that take responsibility for many aspects of the work station traditionally reserved for supervision, often including designing the work, pay and hiring and teaching new employees.

In addition to this trend, some unions are also attempting to expand worker influence in new areas of collective bargaining. Whichever way they may relate to these developments, unions are faced with certain choices, dilemmas and challenges to traditional organizing appeals, leadership styles and labor-management philosophy. For employers, short-term gains from these programs may also present long-term dilemmas.

Although no systematic study of the breadth and depth of what is happening has been conducted, some limited data exist, and there is a strong indication that interest in these developments and further experimentation will continue. A study in 1982 by the New York Stock Exchange surveyed a representative sample of 49,000 U.S. corporations employing 41 million employees in units with more than 100 employees. The results indicate a great acceleration of interest in QWL-related activities, particularly in manufacturing. In fact, three out of four companies with QCs had had them for less than two years. Another finding is that the larger the manufacturing company, the more likely it is to have a QC program. Three out of four companies with 10,000 or more employees have QCs. When asked whether participative management is a "fad destined to disappear" or "a promising new approach," 83 percent of all corporations said it was the latter.

To be sure, the percentage of workers involved in participative programs in these corporations is far below a majority. Nevertheless, the figures present an impressive display of expanding interest and involvement by increasing numbers of workers and managers in such programs.

More intensive participative structures that go beyond the normal QWL are also developing. Basil Whiting, a long-time observer in this field, has indicated that until recently semi-autonomous, autonomous and self-managing work groups have been relatively rare in the United States. But, he says,

in as many as two or three dozen new plant designs in this nation, there are startlingly flat organizational structures and work groups without apparent supervision except what they provide to themselves. Members are cross-trained and rotate among clusters of tasks. They hire, fire and discipline themselves. They are often paid according to the number of jobs they know as judged by their peers, and share in what appear to be quite high profit levels for their kind of facility. They also engage in the kinds of planning and coordinating usually done by top-line managers in normal plants.

Prospects for Worker Participation

Workers' participation in workplace decision making is also linked to the recent intensification of the phenomenon of worker ownership in two ways. First, a number of the worker ownership plans, although motivated primarily by job preservation, have redesigned the workplace decision-making structure to include high levels of worker-owner participation in decision making on the job-site and plant levels. Through problem-solving groups, workers consider and make recommendations on a broader range of areas than is usual in QWL or QC programs. There are also a significant number of worker-elected representatives on the board of directors.

Most worker ownership, however, comes about through employee stock ownership plans, which have no participative decision-making features and are started by traditional managers to gain tax breaks and a source of ready capital through employees' financial participation. Although employees start out with no voting rights, the law prescribes that such rights become operative after a number of years in many of these arrangements. Thus there may emerge in the future a number of enterprises where employees may pool their voting rights to establish more participative control.

Why are many managers interested in QWL and QC schemes or other work-restructuring programs? Management has seen participative programs as a vehicle for dealing with worker alienation in an overeducated work force that, it is claimed, frequently results in absenteeism, drug abuse, low morale and other expressions of worker dissatisfaction. Through enhanced job satisfaction and through harnessing the skills and ideas of those responsible for doing the work, management hopes to increase productivity.

A great many managers are aware that "the new workers"—the younger, better educated workers—are very much more resistant to authoritarianism; they seek more challenge and meaning in work than the last generation of workers. In addition, social analysts Daniel Yankelovich and John Immerwahr [see *The American Review*, Winter 1985] have suggested that the shift toward service and information industries has also meant a shift in job structure, with a greater proportion of high-discretion job holders, those who have a great deal of say over their own performance. They claim that many of these workers, who could easily be motivated to increase the quality and quantity of their input, currently have low motivation under existing management practices that were developed in the early part of the century.

Concern for dealing with worker alienation, however, has been surpassed more recently by an overarching concern by managers—shared by many union leaders and members—with meeting the threat of foreign competition in many of the basic industries in the United States. Many U.S. managers and some union leaders have been attracted to emulating the role of the quality-circle movement in establishing Japan's enviable production record.

A number of analysts have suggested that the workplace of the future will require workers who are adaptable and who are skilled in working in problem-solving teams that understand the new technology of their workplace. There is a need for workers who are trained to analyze the whole system through group problem solving, instead of being familiar with only the narrow mechanics of their own operation in one specific part of the system.

There is also something of a contest going on in the U.S. management world as to whether some significant change in relationships between managers and employees is going to take place. On the one hand, there is the authoritarian, bureaucratic, centralized control approach that continues to view the work world primarily in terms of Tayloristic work-simplification practices. This management style emphasizes larger short-term gains than some participative programs may be able to produce, even though well-constructed QWL programs often appear to make early impressive gains in absenteeism, reduction of grievances, increases in quality and reduction in scrap. Through concession bargaining or through abetting elections that would decertify a union as the representative of the company's employees, this approach is inclined toward shaking up or shaking out unions in their current period of vulnerability.

In contention with this attitude is a developing management perspective and style that is change-oriented, more open, willing to adapt to more participative management methods while being less fearful of shared decision making. It empathizes with the workers' desire for more meaningful, challenging work and understands the need for a more flexible work force in the emerging work world. This perspective employs the new management approaches to maintain or enhance profitability and competitiveness.

This management philosophy may be reinforced as (1) the shift continues to industries requiring more flexible, problem-solving workers; (2) the 1960s generation moves into position as the backbone of the work force; and (3) the replacement of old production units and expansion in the newer, developing industries present the opportunity to design new work facilities.

The participative approach is not without its problems, however, for managers may face a dilemma brought on by the dynamics of meaningful participation. It is best described by sociologists Charles Derber and William Schwartz, who suggest that this new approach resolves

Some of the strains engendered by conventional structures, but in its very solution sets into motion other forces producing a new fundamental strain [These] projects generate increased worker competencies, expectations and desires for job challenge, autonomy and in our interpretation self-governance. These, in the long run, are inconsistent with the institutional boundaries of authority in the new system. . . . Put most simply, the relative autonomy in the labor process required to reduce worker alienation and increase worker integration also "empowers" workers psychologically to seek wide autonomy in the workplace, thereby placing strains on the existing boundaries of authority.

Thus the solutions to current work-design problems may well engender new expectations on the part of the workers involved.

For the new approach to work, unions have to start with the premise that well-designed and well-executed participation programs have a strong appeal for their members or potential members. It was put quite simply but forcefully by a long-time United Automobile Workers' member who volunteered for one of the early meetings of her departmental problem-solving group: "I've been working

Prospects for Worker Participation

here for 28 years and this is the first time anyone, union or management, asked me what I think."

The trends toward worker participation present the labor movement with many opportunities for unions and their members on the one hand and some basic threats and dilemmas on the other. They raise a number of issues: what role the unions should play under what circumstances; what strategies to follow if the QWL movement is to be a vehicle for advancing workplace democracy; and whether to accept it as a phenomenon of labor-management cooperation or one that also has implications for the scope and philosophy of union bargaining.

Many union leaders have concluded or reaffirmed their belief that management has not really accepted unionism in the United States. They bolster their claims by citing employers' current intensified efforts to create or to maintain so-called union-free environments. They point to the roles played by many management consultants who sell an antiunion package that includes using participative management approaches with the work force as a means of enhancing workers' loyalties to management rather than to unions.

A second kind of dilemma occurs at the local level. What should be done when a QC or QWL program is introduced without an invitation to the union to participate? Will this program be designed to undermine the union if the union is neutral or is too weak to oppose the plan effectively? Will it be used to enhance straight productivity or product quality? What about competition with other plants in the same company, and thus in the same union, where the company has decided, or is threatening, to close plants producing the same product?

With members' jobs threatened by foreign competition, many unions have decided that they can be party to arrangements for increasing quality and productivity as long as the effort is not designed to reduce jobs for their members. In practice, this is difficult to do, as many participative efforts have been instituted at the same time as recession-based layoffs were taking place. Some union leaders, satisfied that they can keep the QWL effort from undermining their union and its collective-bargaining function, are actively entering participative arrangements in order to have the program serve their overall interests as well as management's.

More unions are also developing a concept of the work environment and the need to gain greater control over it through collective bargaining and other labor-initiated approaches. Drawing on the Norwegian experience with workplace-democracy policy, sociologist Steven Deutsch suggests that health and safety, including stress and the problems raised by new technology, is an area for enlarging workplace decision making, since workers feel strongly that these problems affect them directly.

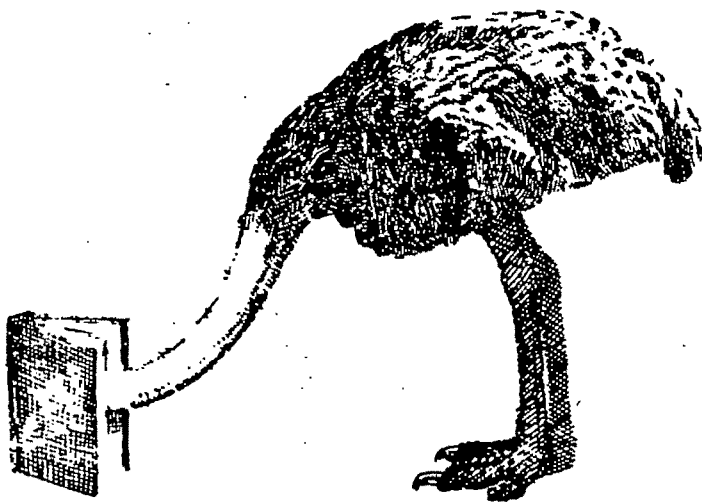
Some unions are now assuming an active approach to such issues, dealing with the prevention of certain work-related problems rather than taking the traditional stance of reacting to the consequences. In the field of technological change, for example, the Communication Workers of America have negotiated the right to be notified of and consulted on new technological decisions. Recently, the International Association of Machinists' local at Eastern Airlines fought hard to win negotiated joint decision making on its pension-fund investment policy. The Eastern Airlines negotiation is part of a strategy by a number of

The American Review

unions to participate in decisions about how the millions of dollars of members' pension funds—currently invested by nonunion decision makers and, ironically, sometimes in antiunion enterprises—are invested in the future. It is not outside the realm of possibility that through the collective-bargaining process pension funds could be invested in enterprises dedicated to designing economically viable and truly democratic workplaces.

The same local union, involved with other Eastern Airlines unions in concession bargaining, recently negotiated a *quid pro quo* of involvement in traditional management decision-making areas, including participation in restructuring the company, worker involvement in designing new facilities and union-controlled seats on the company's board of directors.

Thus change is taking place in union philosophy relating to decision making at the job-site and corporate levels. Though contrary to traditional union philosophy, some union leaders are beginning to feel, as expressed by noted labor analyst B.J. Widick, that "management is too important to be left to managers." Viewing the future of workplace-participation programs, Douglas Fraser, the recently retired president of the United Automobile Workers and member of the Chrysler Corporation board of directors, was optimistic about their expansion. He said, "There's no turning back." □



The Era of Direct Broadcast Satellites

By DAVID WEBSTER

Direct television broadcasting by satellite is already feasible, yet there is growing concern internationally over its implementation. David Webster outlines recent developments, including some of the controversial issues regarding the economic, cultural and political effects of this new technology. He suggests that "the trend of the technology and the drive of the marketplace" will change national systems of television communication in both industrialized and developing countries. Webster has been with the British Broadcasting Corporation since 1953. He is currently a member of the BBC's Board of Management and director of its office in the United States, but this article was written in his personal capacity and does not necessarily reflect the views of the corporation.

WE are on the verge of great changes in the international structures and effects of that most-pervasive of mass media, television. We are passing from the era of the low-powered distribution satellite, which transmits programs through the filter of a broadcaster or a cable system, into the era of the Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS), with a higher powered signal which can go straight into the individual home.

Under a DBS system, all manner of nations, or even all manner of companies which make franchise deals with nations, will have the technical capacity to arrange these direct transmissions to the public the world over. This signal can be transnational and unfiltered. The transmissions have scant respect for existing markets, for national boundaries, for copyright and artistic properties or for the established political and power structure of broadcasting.

DBS will, in effect, create proximity between far-flung points. The economics of communications satellites are not distance-sensitive. They destroy geography. The transmission cost is in sending the signal up and down rather than across. For a satellite with a signal range which spans a continent or an ocean, distances within the cone-like or oval shape of the area reached by the signal—the so-called cone of transmission—become of little economic importance.

Direct Broadcast Satellites, even allowing for cultural differences, barriers of language and the high cost of entry into the business, make possible an unregulated invasion into traditional domestic markets. With a working DBS, we could all become each other's neighbors, with everything that implies, to be enriched, influenced and irritated by each other.

The American Review

Such proximity has serious implications for the business and political structure of broadcasting. It will have long-term social and international policy implications, opening the way, at least technically, for exchanges of values, information and propaganda of unparalleled impact. We are used to arguments about cultural dominance and the free flow of information, but these have usually been in the context of the Third World and North-South competition. By contrast, the changes that are now building up may initially have their greatest impact within the industrialized world, in the rich television markets of Europe in the first instance, but eventually including the United States. Nations, even advanced nations, risk losing control over the development of their own systems of television communication.

Similar possibilities have long been present with international radio transmissions, but with much less importance. Government-sponsored short-wave and medium-wave broadcasts are a commonplace in the Third World and much of Europe, though crackly and unreliable short-wave reception patterns have never made much of an impact within the United States, where a variety of clearer transmissions are available. But television has an impact (and costs) different by several orders of magnitude from radio. The emergence of unregulated television access, therefore, poses problems of law, politics and economics far more profound than any of the familiar conflicts over radio.

So far, responsible government officials do not appear to have recognized these implications. Their discussions of communications technology focus largely on the desire to build high-technology industries, to promote employment and to be seen to be modern. The motives of governments are confused. They know communications are important, but have little basis for understanding how to proceed, which technologies to encourage, how far to intervene or whether to let the supposed magic of the marketplace sort things out.

A rational approach to this new set of questions—which involve not just governments and broadcasters, but also policy analysts and citizens—requires an understanding of just what this new technological development is, and how we got there. We can next consider the promise and delights, but also the difficulties and problems that would be raised or made more serious by the widespread introduction of DBS systems. Then we can see how a DBS industry might develop out of the present confused state of policy, and look at possible policies that might be pursued by individual nations or groups of nations to get the benefit, while avoiding some of the dangers, of the new technology.

As might be expected, television broadcasting developed in diverse ways throughout the world. Europe, for instance, focused mainly on national network systems with little emphasis on local stations, while in the United States local stations were brought together into networks. In both cases the transmissions were initially dependent upon land-lines from telephone companies and local relay transmitters.

From the 1960s the industry moved to the use of communications satellites, as these became cost-efficient, in order to send signals from one broadcaster to another, who in turn arranged onward transmission to the public either directly or through cable systems. These point-to-point communications satellites have spanned the oceans and the continents, but they have emitted low-power signals

The Era of Direct Broadcast Satellites

to large and expensive reception dishes, professionally controlled and licensed.

The possibility of higher powered transponders operating from satellites emerged over a decade ago, with the corollary that the new signals might be received by cheaper and smaller dishes within the economic and technical reach of individual households.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a specialized agency of the United Nations with 158 member-countries, is the treaty organization attempting to regulate international transmissions. Direct Broadcast Satellites first came before the World Administrative Radio Conference (a body convened by the ITU) in 1971, but there was no apparent sense of urgency. In later meetings the issue was joined more directly in the context of a North-South debate over allocation of broadcast frequencies. In the forefront of industrial powers, the United States argued for an evolutionary, "use-as-needed" approach to the assignment of frequencies in the appropriate segment of the electromagnetic spectrum. But the majority succeeded in establishing the principle of assigning guaranteed frequencies to individual member-countries, whether they were in a position to make early use of their assigned facility or not.

In the second half of the decade the World Administrative Radio Conference set about the task of applying this principle to Direct Broadcast Satellites. Over American objections on the grounds that the technology was still evolving and that any widespread DBS deployment was a decade or more away, the European, African and Asian members of the conference accepted and worked out an allotment plan in 1977 and 1979. Individual countries in their hemisphere were assigned specific positions in outer space (orbital slots) in which DBS could be placed, authorized to broadcast on certain frequencies at certain signal strengths. Each nation was given a cone of transmission that would cover its own territory with as little overlap as possible into the territory of others. Exceptions to this principle in Europe were granted to Andorra, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, San Marino and the Vatican, all of them so small that spillover was inevitable, and exceptions were also made for regional groupings in Scandinavia and among Arab states.

As it turned out, the U.S. argument that technology was likely to change rapidly was correct. In the last five years reception technology has advanced significantly, with both the size of the dish and the cost of the associated electronics dropping dramatically. These developments have had the effect of enlarging the scope of the cone of transmission. They also blur regulatory distinctions, for instance, between high-powered DBS and mid-powered satellites, which operate under different rules but are still capable, arguably, of delivering a proper service to individual homes.

These mid-powered satellites are one of three types of equipment relevant to this discussion. More familiar low-powered satellites operating in the C band, which have been with us for a long time, are used by professionals to transmit to very large receiving dishes. The newer mid-powered satellites in the Ku band may not have been designed for transmission to individuals at all and may not even be transmitting on frequencies initially designated for direct broadcast to individuals. They have been considered point-to-point or "fixed-service" facilities rather than facilities for general "broadcasting service." With improved re-

The American Review

ception technology, however, it is in fact practical for an individual household to receive even mid-powered signals on a reasonably small dish about one meter in diameter.

These emerging technical distinctions have given rise to great confusion, since the international regulations in Europe, for instance, concerning the third kind of satellite, classified as Direct Broadcast Satellites, are different from the regulations covering the mid-power, point-to-point satellites. The trend of the technology and the drive of the marketplace could be making a nonsense of the regulatory structure.

In the United States it is different. So far there has been little attempt to interfere with mid-power satellite plans to use frequencies designated for point-to-point communication in order to achieve direct broadcast. DBS allocations were ultimately made for the Western Hemisphere in 1983, but in a practical sense there seems to be no barrier to entering the market by the side door. By and large, any satellite transmission you can see that you are intended to see is DBS. This is a down-to-earth definition, but one that is not yet officially recognized in Europe. The question is whether official recognition will turn out to be all that important in the real world of market pressures—maybe only if it bends.

Today, if the problems of initial cost and acceptable programming can be met, it is technically possible for all Europe, and other parts of the world as well, to become a morass of overlapping signals from satellites assigned originally to cover mainly one national area. And the likelihood is that further improvements both in transmission and at the receiving end of direct broadcasting will be achieved. Already today, for example, the cone of transmission of the allotted Irish satellite could readily cover Britain as well as Ireland, while that of Britain could cover not only Britain and Ireland but also much of continental Europe. Moreover, a Direct Broadcast Satellite, beyond the edge of its normal transmissions, can become a communications satellite to larger dishes. So you add this simple ability to pull a distant foreign signal into a local cable system and send it into homes from there.

The new range of DBS possibilities—both high-powered and mid-powered—has predictably led to intense interest in the past two years, not only on the part of governments but especially among private entrepreneurs who might be licensed by nations to use all or part of their allocated orbital slots. Possibilities are being studied by a number of entrepreneurs, some seeking to reduce costs by using mid-power DBS transponders that would nonetheless reach a worthwhile audience and some hoping to bend rules and operate on frequencies allocated originally not to true high-power DBS but to point-to-point fixed-service communications.

The disorientation foreshadowed by the DBS technology is strikingly political, but commercial and legal as well. The possibilities for propaganda are immense.... Direct attempts at propaganda, however, may be the least of our problems.

Television programs tend to reflect the values of the country of origin. Even if nonpolitical in character, they are not value free. They may be designated good, bad or indifferent artistically, but the real point is that they are not yours. So if a nation believes that it has a culture of value, and one which should be

The Era of Direct Broadcast Satellites

healthily reflected in the dominant media, it has a new problem. Nations with tender new communications systems can become dominated by strong ones.

For some small nations there may be another side of the coin. Under international agreements, all nations can have certain rights to pieces of the frequency spectrum. As a legal entity, however small, the island of Bermuda, for instance, has been allocated two orbital slots for DBS. These are like property rights in outer space. If you have no need or no money to build your own house, there may be someone else who will pay to pick up the option. Of course, your property has value only if it is a convenient path into a more lucrative market, if nobody can find another path, and if you make a deal at the right time. What is given by regulation can be lost if the regulation collapses. . . .

One of the first things the new commercial and technical possibilities threaten in Europe is the notion of public-service broadcasting. For many reasons, some of them idealistic and some not, West European countries have tended to government control of their broadcasting, both in its standards and in its quantity, and to fund it with public money. Government broadcasting authorities also controlled imports, taking the pick of the American product. By and large, Europe has put its faith in a system which relied on the reallocation of resources in the name of the public good, by financing the bread from the revenues of a limited number of circuses.

Once the restraints of regulation and nationally controlled transmission technology are removed, established business practices are disrupted. The problem of copyright arrangements to compensate the owners of the programming rights is complicated, but pales into insignificance when compared to the potential cultural and social impact of satellite development. All this is so if one considers simply the interaction of the desire for more entertainment and the desire to make money—ignoring the potential for deliberate propaganda.

This can happen today in the smaller developing countries receiving the signals of even the existing low-powered point-to-point satellites. Take the case of an island in the Caribbean or in the Pacific. So far its residents have had access to short-wave radio from afar, their own local radio, possibly a small-scale television service that buys syndicated old programs from Hollywood. Now that same island can buy a satellite dish (even if individual homeowners cannot afford it), and pull in signals from other lands to feed the hunger for entertainment that has been stimulated by video cassette machines and bootleg tapes. . . .

The Caribbean has been in the forefront of this phenomenon because of the easy availability of nearby U.S. signals. But islands in the Pacific have also received offers from foreign entrepreneurs eager to build them satellite dishes or domestic cable systems.

The prospect of every man with his own satellite dish, receiving television programs from literally heaven knows where, has so far sent the nations of Europe, in the first instance, into a search for defensive alternatives.

Faced with losing control over the television signals entering their countries, and thereby over the whole structure of their broadcast communications, they have the option of imposing restrictive laws or setting up external barriers in the marketplace—for instance, by establishing technical standards incompatible with those of other countries and making it uneconomical to try to overcome them. . . .

The American Review

Historically, as we have seen, most of Europe's existing television systems have been highly regulated and deliberately confined to a limited number of channels, but that is changing. If the choice from outside can no longer be barred, one strategy is to multiply the choices from inside. The precedent of the Radio Luxembourg experience may be helpful. In the 1950s, popular commercial programming from Luxembourg, complete with hit tunes and breezy chatter, competed with the long-standing radio monopoly of the British Broadcasting Corporation, with its staid and highbrow image. Later, it was followed by pirate stations from ships offshore. Rather than lose its appeal to younger Britons altogether, the BBC had to revamp its image and its programming. That and the introduction of commercial radio into the United Kingdom brought the audience back to the British rather than off-shore programming. Today Luxembourg may again play a significant role in the development of transnational television signals in this new era, although the costs and risks in such a television venture are very much greater.

Some governments argue that with the new television technology, it must be made economically and technically preferable to pass programming through a new kind of filter. In Europe, most governments appear to have decided that the filter should be a professionally controlled cable system.

With cable, the principle of a national filter is retained, even as the choices of programs multiply. The market can be rigged to inhibit the spread of satellite reception directly by individuals. The trick here is not actually to ban direct reception, but to discourage it by technological standards and an economic structure that makes cable cheaper for the consumer. The cable system, of course, can be regulated because it is a public franchise.

But even if a government is successful in turning people away from the temptation of direct reception, there is a catch. The alternative, the cable system, has an insatiable and indiscriminating appetite for product. Few nations have the production base to feed the multichanneled monster. The only source of popular entertainment at the right price is the United States, which has the popular inventory....

As technology brings more channels, market forces will grow to dominate, and some forms of government control may be eroded. There will be some modification and restraints, but the likely way to generate the large amounts of cash needed to expand communications systems, which governments themselves may be reluctant to spend, will be to let people try to make money out of it. Technology and the market impetus will crash against the old barriers of supposed public good, and these eventually will fall.

A nation well served by a creative, powerful and independent communications industry, such as the United States, will be less vulnerable than those which are weak or restrictive in the information and entertainment they serve their people. But there are questions. The United States, particularly in its over-building of multichannel cable systems, already shows every sign of expanding capacity to transmit far beyond its capacity to provide an economic base for anything worth watching. This trend is only likely to accelerate as DBS reception becomes a technical and economic commonplace. Good programs cost money. If programs become available from elsewhere, at the right price, they will build their

The Era of Direct Broadcast Satellites

share of audience in a highly fragmented market.

So far, most imports into the United States have been vaguely cultural, not much of a threat to the dominant American stream of programming. But as the national audience becomes fragmented with many offerings on many channels, old loyalties are eroded and other influences may gain a foothold. . . . The United States has never been confronted with this question in any serious fashion, at least not until now. It has a prosperous and diverse communications industry. Signals from other countries, or indeed competition in programming, have never seemed threatening. But this can change; the United States may not be immune forever, for good or ill.

The factors working to speed up a revolution in transnational television are technological feasibility, which creates its own kind of imperative; the drive for markets; and a defensive need to occupy territory before it is inhabited by others. People also seem to want more choice of television programming, but it is not clear how much they are willing to pay for it, by whatever method of transmission.

In contrast, slowing down the revolution are different national technical standards; business doubts about highly capital-intensive and long-term projects; and obstructive government regulation. There are also copyright tangles and cultural resistance, leading to a problem of obtaining programs that people actually want to watch in enough volume to make the enterprise worthwhile. The question is whether the revolutionaries marching into a supposedly glorious future might trample down the harvest of today.

Very few governments and very few responsible officials seem to have thought the matter through. Even among the few who have addressed it seriously, there is a dismaying mixture of motives in what is proclaimed as a communications policy. Either such naive faith is proclaimed in market forces that there is in fact no policy, or there is a government plan for active intervention for industrial reasons. In some cases there is a confused mix of both. Communications thinking is so muddled up with the need to stimulate or protect certain industries, to provide employment, to protect culture or to placate certain constituencies, that it makes no sense in terms of its substance—which is communications.

Another danger is that aspiring nations may invest in an infrastructure for communications far beyond their real needs. It could become the latest status symbol, like an uneconomic airline. Its effects on national values, cultures and cultural diversities may prove, however, even less well judged and far more serious.

For larger and more prosperous lands, confusions of motive could lead to high investment in over-elaborate systems using an inappropriate technology, smothering people with excessive entertainment options, all in an attempt to provide an economic base for interactive home banking systems, energy control, home security and computer chat, things probably attainable by a cheaper technology of less glamour. Many of these services are, no doubt, socially useful if not essential, and one day people may regard them as the norm of a comfortable home, just like tap water. But the real cost must be examined. It is not merely an economic cost.

Simple prudence belongs alongside the business barriers, the high initial in-

The American Review

vestment and continuing high risk, and the regulatory barriers that linger to inhibit the new DBS technologies. People can be misled by a romantic notion of what may be technically possible, to the neglect of what may make good economic sense and what may be politically acceptable. A vast gulf also looms between the vision of those who wish to exploit markets, however crudely, and those who wish to preserve culture, good or bad, with varying degrees of wistful conservatism. Much scholarship has been applied to convergence in the telecommunications industry, data flow, the problem of privacy and so on, but so far little has been done to examine the possible political and social transnational effects of the new technologies.

There are some who will argue that the breakdown of the old order is for the best anyhow, and with a wistful Panglossian air tell you about market forces and technological imperatives. Others, with a more wild-eyed look, and usually planning to use other people's money, will lecture on the new Renaissance, which they claim is about to astonish us, if the market is liberated. They regard regulated television services as today's version of monks laboring over illuminated manuscripts, keeping the mysteries the monopoly of the elite until the age of the printing press. The more conservative school of thought shudders at the possible downfall of responsible and politically accountable mediating institutions (the established broadcasters), which are regarded as a vital part of the social fabric of nations.

As it will probably work out, the revolution will not come fast enough for the revolutionaries. Indeed, many of its active proponents will lose a great deal of money by being too far ahead of the game. The conservatives, on the other hand, will be unable to resist the change altogether. Some good things will be lost; one can hope that some others will be found.

What should be the basis of rational governmental thinking? The first rule should be that "more is not always better," and the second should be that "what is possible is not always desirable."

Governments wishing to give people more viewing options, by whatever suitable technology, without washing away hope for their indigenous production base, should move to strengthen that base first.

For the larger countries, a reasonable policy would be to move steadily forward into DBS in a controlled and phased fashion. The sovereign allocations of DBS capacity could be used in transnational cooperation. The British and the Irish, for example, could treat their total of 10 orbital slots in a joint coherent development, since all their signals could cover both markets. Such planning could bring economies of scale and maximize new technological opportunities, such as much clearer pictures on larger screens. Communities should multiply the means of transmission only when they have some reasonably clear idea of what it is that they expect to have transmitted. The riposte to the statement "I can give you 50 channels" should always be "50 channels of what?" Any other approach is not only politically irresponsible, it may also be bad for business.

The aim should be to provide a service to the overall public, rather than allowing direct competition for a very fragile market. Cutthroat competition, except in the largest and strongest and most entrepreneurial economies, would create unacceptable losses in the early days of founding a new industry, as each

The Era of Direct Broadcast Satellites

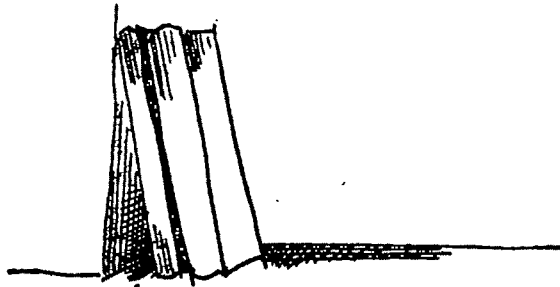
separate company lunged for what it saw as the most lucrative sector. In some cases, commercial prudence will prevent too much of this bloodletting; in others, some degree of government involvement in providing ground rules and early economic help may be needed.

The smaller countries that have a legal right to their real estate in the sky but no means to develop it should attempt to assess its value and trade off their rights on a leasehold basis to others to whom it has value and who have the resources to build. They will have to act fast, for people will find other paths into the market and their celestial real estate could lose its luster. They should use their leverage to obtain the basic infrastructure for a reasonable communications system of their own, nothing too grand or too glamorous, but suited to their real needs and conducive to the preservation and enrichment of their own culture and values. Plenty of alien corn will be scattered around; they should try and nurture some of the homegrown variety.

At the end of the day, the net effect of greater viewer choice, by whatever method of transmission, will probably be good. The more international communication, the better, at least in theory. But this will be so only if there is real choice, enriching to the consumer, rather than a false choice between economic modules labeled as programs, manufactured for largest audience at lowest cost.

Doubtless Siena worried about the cultural impact of Florence in Renaissance times, but we now know that that was an interaction full of creativity and confidence. The danger of the unthinking multiplication of television options is that it may homogenize and extinguish local flavor.

It is the Direct Broadcast Satellite and the cable that present a dark scenario. But the technology is neutral. A brighter story is also within our grasp. For it to become reality, we will need more thought, imagination and understanding than have so far been in evidence. □



The Riddle of Chaos

By JAMES GLEICK

The random disorder that seems to exist everywhere in nature, from the chaotic flow of turbulent water to erratic shifts in an animal population, has inspired a new scientific discipline. Recent theoretical research by a group of biologists and physicists now suggests that nature, in its tendency to chaos, actually favors certain patterns which can be expressed mathematically. As James Gleick, an assistant editor at *The New York Times*, says, this discovery may eventually suggest ways of predicting phenomena from heart attacks to hurricanes.

FOR as long as the world has had physicists inquiring into the laws of nature, it has had a sense of deep ignorance about chaos—disorder, turbulence, in water, in the atmosphere, in the erratic fluctuations of wildlife populations, in the fibrillation of the human heart. The mathematics has simply not existed.

Mitchell Feigenbaum, a 39-year-old physicist at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, has become midwife for a new scientific discipline that is exploring turbulence and disorder of a kind that a decade ago seemed impenetrable. It is built on the discovery that of all the possible paths to disorder, nature favors just a few. It has its own technique of using computers and its own special language. Its practitioners—physicists, mathematicians, chemists, biologists—number no more than a few hundred scientists in the United States and Europe and a few dozen in the Soviet Union and Japan. At the moment, this new discipline doesn't even have a name, just a nickname: chaos.

"Chaos is asking very, very hard questions," says Joseph Ford, a professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology who organized an influential early conference on the subject in 1977. "It offers the possibility that the answers are going to severely modify our view of the universe. There is a notion that we are beginning to get the microscopic details of how the universe may work."

The growing numbers of researchers in the field hope that chaos will ultimately suggest ways of predicting weather and earthquakes, designing optical computers and jet engines, explaining economic trends and the physiology of the heart. Feigenbaum and his colleagues try to be cautious about predicting real-world applications, and in their cooler moments they emphasize that true turbulence is in some ways as murky as ever. The whole business has a trendy appeal, perhaps trendier than some physicists consider justified. The very notion of order amid chaos, after all, has long been a cliché, applied to all kinds of scientific endeavor.

Feigenbaum made his first key breakthrough in 1976 and 1977, and in the

The Riddle of Chaos

last few years the word has been spreading in a remarkable round of conferences and symposiums and workshops. The 1984 Nobel Symposium in Göteborg, Sweden, was devoted to chaos, with an opening address by Feigenbaum. Even so, awareness is just now penetrating the nontechnical segments of the academic world. "The folk in the academic community are beginning to recognize that there's something called chaos," Ford says. "They're not sure if they like it or if they'd prefer it would go away, but they know something's afoot."

Chaos seems to be everywhere. It's in a rising column of cigarette smoke that suddenly breaks into wild swirls. It's in a dripping faucet that goes from a steady pattern to a random one. "It's in the behavior of the weather, the behavior of an airplane in flight, the behavior of oil flowing in underground pipes," says Kenneth G. Wilson, professor of physics at Cornell. All of these behave in strikingly similar ways. The actual stuff that is disorderly seems to matter less than the disorder itself.

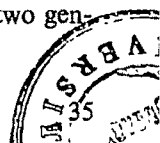
Wilson's Nobel prizewinning work in physics in the 1960s provided a springboard for Feigenbaum, who made his own discoveries at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. Using a calculator and then a series of desktop computers, Feigenbaum found regularities in the behavior of some simple mathematical equations when they were worked over and over again, with the results being fed back into the equations as input. The equations could be manipulated to produce, first, orderly strings of numbers—series with recognizable logic—and then disorderly ones. As Feigenbaum watched the numbers turn from orderly to disorderly, he began to see patterns in the transition, and the patterns were pretty, the way such things are pretty to a mathematician with an eye for unexpected simplicity.

At first, Feigenbaum and his colleagues assumed that the patterns had something to do with the particular equations he was examining. But to their enduring surprise, completely different equations seemed to produce the same patterns in the transition to disorder. A mathematical description of these patterns always seemed to involve certain particular numbers, now known informally as Feigenbaum numbers. The patterns seemed to have universality, and universality was magic.

Even then, Feigenbaum's work might have made no more than good dinner-table conversation, without lasting significance. Indeed, the scientific journals wouldn't touch the articles he offered them. But the state of things in a half-dozen different fields made the time right for his discovery. The implication was that if these regularities were universal, they would appear in real systems governed by mathematical equations far more complicated than the ones Feigenbaum had explored—equations for the motion of fluids or the change in animal populations. And sure enough, Feigenbaum's computer patterns turned up in 1978 experiments with fluids in France. The news traveled fast.

"You get these subjects that become popular when one person makes a breakthrough that makes it possible to do a lot of research in an area," Wilson said. "Here the breakthrough was Feigenbaum's work, finding a way to study the borderline between organized behavior and chaotic behavior."

A few of Feigenbaum's colleagues now believe they are seeing the beginnings of a true course change for physics. The field has been dominated for two gen-



The American Review

erations by the glittering abstractions of high-energy particles and quantum mechanics. The achievements have changed the 20th-century landscape. But to some—especially younger physicists—progress year to year is beginning to seem slow, the naming of new particles is beginning to seem empty, the body of theory is beginning to seem cluttered. There has long been a feeling, not always expressed openly, that theoretical physics has strayed far from human intuition about the world.

Whether this will prove to be fruitful heresy or just plain heresy, no one knows. But some of those who think physics may be working its way into a corner are looking to chaos as a way out. They like the feel of it. For one thing, it has a crisp mathematical quality that recalls Newton's revolution in physics. For another, it opens a window on the great gulf between knowledge of what one thing does—one water molecule, one bit of heart tissue, one neuron—and what millions of them can do.

Watch two bits of foam flowing side by side at the bottom of a waterfall. What can be told about how close they were at the top? Nothing. As far as mathematics is concerned, God might just as well have taken all those water molecules under the table and shuffled them personally.

Physicists always assumed that when they saw such a random relationship between what goes into a system and what comes out, the randomness had to be part of the system, in the form of noise or error. In a way, the modern study of chaos began with a creeping realization in the 1960s that quite simple mathematical equations produced results every bit as violent as a waterfall. Tiny differences in input could quickly become overwhelming differences in output—a phenomenon given the name "sensitive dependence on initial conditions." In weather, this translates into what is only half-jokingly known as "the butterfly effect"—the notion that a butterfly flapping its wings today in Beijing might affect the weather next month in New York. It is not a notion designed to give comfort to long-range forecasters.

Understanding of the butterfly effect began with Edward N. Lorenz of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who worked out many of the unimagined properties of these systems. But his work was published mainly in meteorology journals, and few physicists appreciated the consequences of it even five years ago. For scientists who had not actually played with the equations themselves, the notion could be deeply implausible.

For biologists, among others, all this was interesting. Consider, for example, a population of fish. In a limitless ocean, it might grow smoothly from year to year, and biologists could describe the change with a mathematical model using a linear equation. But to make the model one step more realistic, biologists might look at a fish in a pond. There, if one begins with just a few fish, the population grows; when there are too many for the amount of food, it declines. That one twist makes the system nonlinear. The waxing and waning of the fish population can still be described quite simply by an equation, repeated over and over again to calculate the change from generation to generation, but the equation can do startling things.

It could be that, no matter how many fish you start with in the pond, the population eventually settles down to a stable number, like a pendulum making

shorter and shorter swings until it comes to a halt. But a few biologists, attuned to the mathematical developments of the 1960s and '70s, saw the other possibilities. One of them was Robert M. May, professor of biology at Princeton University.

"Most of our intuitions formed in mathematics or physics courses are that if you have a fairly simple description of something, then it's going to describe fairly simple behavior," May says. "But if you take a population that is more boom-and-bust in its dynamics, you find that it doesn't do something simple as you thought."

Working out the results on a computer, a scientist could alter the model, slowly changing one variable in an equation to make it represent a more boom-and-bust fish population, like turning a knob to raise the heat under a pot of boiling water. After a certain point, the population might start to oscillate, settling down not to one stable number but to two different numbers in alternating years. Then, as the boom-and-bust variable changed further, the period of oscillation might change to four years, then eight, and so on until suddenly the population became completely erratic, changing year by year in an unpredictable way. That pattern, called "period doubling," is now recognized as one fundamental kind of transition to chaos.

The real world, of course, does have randomness and noise that don't figure in an idealized calculation of this kind—a fish population might depend on a hundred different variables, beginning with the weather. But period doubling did turn up in experiments with fluids. A one-centimeter cube of liquid, for example, is slowly heated from below. The warm liquid rises in a smooth rolling motion. Then, as the temperature difference is increased, wobbles appear in the rolls, and then wobbles in the wobbles. A probe, measuring the speed of the liquid at a given point, finds first a constant speed, then an oscillation between two speeds, each repeating itself, say, once a second. Then the two speeds split to four, each showing up half as often, and so on, until chaos sets in.

"The world of biology out there outside the laboratory really has so much environmental noise and so much interaction among species that I don't look to see the crisp patterns, the Feigenbaum numbers, appearing the way they do in physics," May says. "And yet I think that many of the oscillations you see in the real world are oscillations of the kind that are latent in these nonlinear sorts of equations." Some of his colleagues are even more optimistic, expecting chaos to help in understanding cycles in measles epidemics or predator-prey populations.

May published an intriguing article about all this in the scientific journal *Nature* in 1976, exhorting his colleagues to look at the odd behaviors that develop when simple equations act upon themselves over and over again, and to teach their students about them. "It was biologists who said, 'Hey, this is really important—deterministic models do mad things,'" he says. "Feigenbaum went one step further and said, 'Not only do they do mad things, but there are important regularities you might look for and take seriously.'"

"It's not enough to have an idea, you've got to understand how important it can be. And even if you've noticed how important it is, if there isn't an audience of people ready to listen to you, it doesn't matter." In 1976, the audience was not quite ready.

The American Review

Sometime in 1974, the physicists in the Theoretical Division at Los Alamos became aware that their new colleague was working 26-hour days, which meant that his waking schedule was slowly rolling in and out of phase with theirs. It also meant that he was taking long, lonely walks in the starlight that hammers down through the thin air of the mesas. Feigenbaum was an unusual case. He had exactly one published article to his name, he was working on nothing that seemed to have any particular promise, yet, at the age of 29, he had already become a sort of resident savant among the savants.

"He acquired the reputation of being the super-bright person you went to see when you couldn't figure things out," says Peter A. Carruthers, a senior fellow of Los Alamos who was then head of the division. "He became the perfect consultant, and when people could find him, they would bring him problems about anything at all."

Some of his friends, though, were wondering whether he was ever going to produce any work of his own. As willing as he was to do impromptu magic with their problems, he didn't seem interested in devoting his own research to any questions less cosmic than, say, "What is time?"

His choice of physics as a specialty had begun pragmatically. As a child he was fascinated by the radio. "When I was 10 or 11, it was known first of all that electrical engineers worked on radios, and second that an electrical engineer could maybe get a job and earn a salary. In college, it grew clear that what I wanted to know about a radio was more apt to be in physics than in electrical engineering.

"I always had a feeling that all things of humanities were pleasant things, but somehow they were what you're supposed to know just by being a person. But the mathematical and scientific stuff, that was work, and that was how you contributed to the human race. I don't know how I thought that."

Feigenbaum graduated from the City University of New York in 1964 and went on to MIT, where he got his doctorate in elementary-particle physics in 1970. Then he spent a fruitless four years at Cornell and at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute—fruitless, that is, in terms of the steady publication of work on manageable problems that is essential for a young university scientist. In his own mind, he still believes this was a time when he did the best thinking of his life, on the most profound questions, but it led nowhere. He had nothing to show—it was all, as he says, loose and floppy. He believes that his career was almost lost. But Peter Carruthers, who knew him at Cornell as perhaps the most talented young student he had ever seen, brought him to Los Alamos.

When inspiration came to Feigenbaum, it was in the form of a picture, a mental image of two small wavy forms and one big one. That was all. He had been working for months on the problem of period doubling, running numbers through a calculator for hours on end, then moving on to a big computer, and he had discovered his first universal constant. It is an expression of exactly how rapidly a system undergoes period doubling on its way toward chaos—*always*. It is 4.669201609....

When Feigenbaum discovered this number, he did what any mathematician would do. He calculated it to great precision and tried multiplying and dividing different combinations of other well-known constants to see if his number was

related somehow. It didn't seem to be, and for months he couldn't shake a suspicion that somehow he was still missing the point. He felt as though fate had dropped a jewel in his lap and he didn't know what to do with it.

Then, at lunch one day, that vague wavy image came to him—no more, perhaps, than the visible top of a vast iceberg of mental processing that had taken place below the waterline of consciousness. It had to do with scaling, the way the small features of a thing relate to the large features, and it gave him the path he needed. Scaling, as Kenneth Wilson had discovered a decade before, can let you throw out a lot of unnecessary information and focus on what truly describes the essence of a structure. For period doubling, scaling showed not only when one value—a total population or a fluid speed—would break into two, but also just where the new values would be found. Scaling was an intimate feature of the peculiar world Feigenbaum was beginning to explore.

It is a world that depends on the existence of computers as no discipline ever has before. For Feigenbaum, to begin with, the computer was a way to bridge a professional gap between theory and experimentation. For particle physicists, any experiment is costly in time, money and technical sophistication. But to explore the realm of partial differential equations, Feigenbaum and others have made the computer their own accelerator, cloud chamber and camera all in one.

Early users of computers discovered that problems which could not be solved directly could often be simulated, and simulation has become a standard technique for things like weather forecasting. Given the weather at one time at thousands of points, and given equations for how weather changes, a computer can simulate the changes and see what happens. That is useful for certain problems; it is a powerful technique. Unfortunately, it is a complicated world. No existing computer, and no computer that will be built soon, can calculate enough points with enough speed to handle a rich system for long. Even if computers could be made unimaginably powerful, someone would still have to gather information more nimbly than is possible with satellites and balloons. And even if that could be managed, there is still the butterfly effect.

Feigenbaum's technique, although it owes something to the spirit of simulation, is quite different. He does not use computers so much to solve problems as to explore them. He wants to develop intuition, the way a baseball player has developed the intuition to catch balls by watching thousands of them sail skyward.

"It's a way to go in and probe a problem," Feigenbaum says. "You look at something, you see what comes out, and you figure out a little better what was going on. It isn't a way to get a careful set of data—the data, in fact, aren't even interesting. The idea is to home in and see what are the principles. Each one of these problems that you start playing with is slightly more complicated than the next. There are surprises in each of them, and one has to learn the repertoire of what these things do."

It can be dauntingly esoteric, yet surprisingly basic. If you tune in for a moment to Feigenbaum describing his work to what he thinks of as a general audience, you might hear something like this: "...and all it is is a Duffing's equation—this is a damped, driven, anharmonic oscillator. It's a quartic postpotential, so just an x -cubed force law, I haven't even put in a linear term there, it's explicitly dissipative...."

The American Review

But he might just as well be talking about a child getting pushed on a playground swing. It is easy for a mathematician to describe what happens, with just a few traditional equations. The swing gets a regular push, it accelerates down, decelerates up, loses a bit to friction, gets another push. The motion can quickly settle down to a pattern, with the swing coming to the same height each time. But, odd as it seems, the motion can also turn out to be utterly unpredictable.

The unpredictability comes from two essential features of this simple system—each producing a little mathematical twist, and each shared by the more interesting systems of nature, like the weather. The swing is damped, and it is driven: damped because friction is trying to bring it to a halt, driven because it is getting a periodic push. The weather is damped and driven in the same way, always losing energy through friction and dissipation of heat to outer space, and always getting a push from the sun.

Traditional mathematics can't answer the easiest questions about the future of a child's swing—how fast the swing will travel on average, how many times an hour the swing will get at least a meter off the ground. A computer can look at the problem by simulating it, rapidly calculating each cycle. But the tiny imprecision built into each calculation builds up, because this is a system with, yes, sensitive dependence on initial conditions. Before long, a simulation of even this trivial example starts to require immense computer power.

Feigenbaum uses his computers to poke around in systems like this, changing the friction or the force or the timing to see what happens. A screen that turns the data into color pictures is his way of allowing quick, intuitive recognition of patterns.

Watching Feigenbaum work can be mesmerizing. It is, first of all, a process of continual abstraction, winnowing out unnecessary detail to isolate the essentials. There is no need to chart the whole history of a system like a child's swing, for example—one need only look at the top of each cycle. So Feigenbaum might begin by placing a point on a blank screen, its east-west position representing one variable, its north-south another. The computer picks up the dot and runs with it, tracing, perhaps, a closed curve that loops back on itself. Start somewhere else and the computer traces a different curve—the curves representing a regularity in the system that might have been hard to perceive directly. Somewhere else, and the dot remains stationary, representing a perfectly regular cycle that doesn't change from swing to swing. When Feigenbaum is done, he has a multicolor map of the system's behavior, with areas of recognizable pattern and areas of disorder, dots sprinkled randomly.

For some systems, a very special sort of map can appear. It is known as a strange attractor, and it has become a kind of emblem for the whole discipline. A strange attractor isn't drawn smoothly. It begins with dots jumping about erratically, until a pattern starts to take shape gradually, as if appearing out of the mist. It is a kind of curve folded in upon itself over and over again.

The strange attractor has two odd qualities. Because it is made up of points scattered in an unpredictable order, two points close together on the curve may have begun unpredictably far apart—another example of sensitivity to initial conditions. But it is the second quality, a scaling quality, that has captured many scientists' imagination. When a piece of a strange attractor is magnified, it shows

detail that was at first invisible. When the detail is magnified, even more detail appears, in patterns of infinite depth. The closer one looks, the more the curve seems to be repeating itself at smaller scales, like an unending sequence of Russian dolls one inside another.

Feigenbaum's first papers from Los Alamos, in 1976 and 1977, were returned unpublished. It didn't matter. "In truth, the dissemination of information no longer goes through journals," Feigenbaum says. "It all goes through a well-supported preprint system." Indeed, in the age of photocopying, scientists have mailing lists for their papers, and staying current is very much a matter of making sure you are on the right mailing lists. Even now, Feigenbaum's complete published works would barely fill a small book.

A 1977 conference in Como, Italy, organized by Joseph Ford of Georgia Tech, was a turning point. "It became clear that somewhere a time had become right for such a subject," Feigenbaum says. "People weren't necessarily there to understand about fluids, or about particle physics, but about all sorts of curiosities that were arising in nonlinear problems."

Ford himself remembers it as a kind of epiphany. "In disciplines from astronomy to zoology, people were just publishing in their narrow disciplinary journals, totally unaware that the other people were around. In their own areas, they were regarded as a bit eccentric. But if you just changed the words, they were all doing the same thing. These people were grateful to find out everybody else was there. Feigenbaum's talk was the highlight of the meeting. It was one of those things whose time had come."

Richard J. Cohen at MIT is working on what he believes is probably the main health problem for Western society. Robert Shaw at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, is on the verge of finishing a long awaited paper on the physics of a dripping faucet.

Cohen, who holds a joint appointment in the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology and in the MIT physics department, has developed a novel approach to the chaos that develops in the human heart in hundreds of thousands of cardiac deaths each year in the United States. About half the time, chaos in the heart—ventricular fibrillation—comes after a blocked artery causes the death of tissue. But half the time, the cause appears to be only some kind of electrical instability.

With animal experiments and with a computer model, Cohen and several colleagues are exploring the circumstances in which the heartbeat begins to disintegrate until the heart is no longer pumping blood. Their hope is to develop ways of identifying people who are at risk before, as Cohen says, "the catastrophic event occurs." They have already observed period doubling and some of the other classic patterns in the onset of chaos.

"We're trying to approach this problem from a very different perspective than has been done traditionally," he says. "It is a clear instance of the Feigenbaum phenomenon, a regular phenomenon, which under certain circumstances, becomes chaotic, and it turns out that the electrical activity in the heart has many parallels with other systems that develop chaotic behavior."

The dripping faucet, for example. Shaw, a physicist, has been studying it for several years as a theoretical paradigm of chaos. He, too, has both a computer

model and an experimental setup—in his case a brass nozzle and a plastic tub of water. The drops of water interrupt a beam of light, to measure the intervals precisely, and the whole thing is controlled by a little computer.

A slow drip can be quite regular, each drop a little bag of surface tension that breaks off when it reaches a certain size. But the size of the drop changes slightly depending on the speed of the flow and depending on whether there is a little rebound from the drop before. And that is enough to make the system nonlinear.

"If you turn it up, you can see a regime where the drops are still separate, but the pitter-patter becomes irregular," Shaw says. "As it turns out, it's not a predictable pattern beyond a short period of time."

It also shows sensitivity to initial conditions, so vibration has been a serious issue. Shaw found himself doing much of the work at night, when people would be less likely to be tramping by in the corridor. "Unfortunately," he says, "it turns out that the thing is an excellent seismometer."

For some scientists, there is reason to pause when they explore systems as simple as a faucet and find that they are, as Shaw says, eternally creative.

Practically speaking, it means that scientists have to think differently about the problems of nature. It changes their intuitions about what the answers can look like, and that changes the questions they ask. Chaos becomes a technique for doing science—but it also becomes a conceptual framework on which theoreticians can hang some of their most treasured suspicions about the workings of the universe.

To some physicists, chaos seems like a kind of answer to the problem of free will. The realization that the simplest, most deterministic equations can look just like random noise suggests—philosophically, at least—that the Calvinists' deterministic view of the world can be reconciled with the appearance of free will.

To people like Ford, chaos is also something like a death knell for the probabilistic ideas of quantum mechanics. "Chaos makes it absolutely clear what the limits are," he says. Last year he gave a talk titled, after Einstein, "Does God Play Dice with the Universe?" "The answer is yes, of course," he says. "But they're loaded dice. And the main objective of physics now is to find out by what rules were they loaded and how can we use them to our own ends."

To some artificial intelligence specialists at the Institute for Advanced Study and at Los Alamos, chaos suggests a means of linking the simple behavior of neurons to the unpredictable behavior of brains. And to Feigenbaum himself, it is at least a glimpse of a way to link the analytic achievements of his profession to his intuitions about the world.

In the last few years, he has begun going to museums to look at how artists handle complicated subjects, especially subjects with interesting texture, like Turner's water, painted with small swirls atop large swirls, and then even smaller swirls atop those. "It's abundantly obvious that one doesn't know the world around us in detail," he says. "What artists have accomplished is realizing that there's only a small amount of stuff that's important, and then seeing what it was. So they can do some of my research for me."

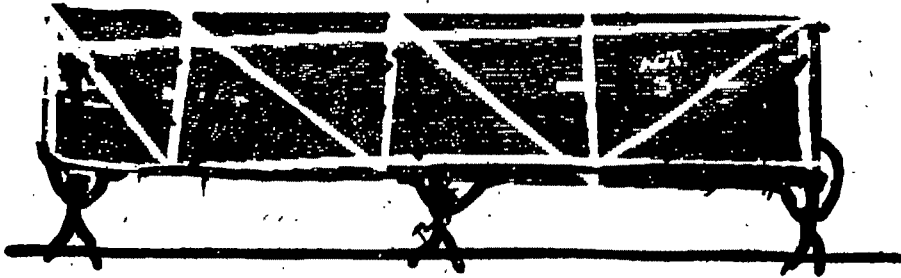
"I truly do want to know how to describe clouds. But to say there's a piece over here with that much density, and next to it a piece with this much density—to accumulate that much detailed information, I think is wrong. It's certainly not

The Riddle of Chaos

how a human being perceives those things, and it's not how an artist perceives them. Somewhere the business of writing down partial differential equations is not to have done the work on the problem.

"One has to look for different ways," he says. "One has to look for scaling structures—how do big details relate to little details. You look at fluid disturbances, complicated structures in which the complexity has come about by a persistent process. At some level they don't care very much what the size of the process is—it could be the size of a pea or the size of a basketball. The process doesn't care where it is, and moreover it doesn't care how long it's been going. The only things that can ever be universal, in a sense, are scaling things.

"In a way, art is a theory about the way the world looks to human beings. Somehow the wondrous promise of the earth is that there are things beautiful in it, things wondrous and alluring, and by virtue of your trade you want to understand them." □



The Liberal Arts College: A Continuing Debate

By ALLAN O. PFNISTER

In the past decade, increasing numbers of American postsecondary students have been opting for professional and applied fields instead of liberal arts studies. This trend concerns many educators, who decry not only the serious implications for society as a whole, but also the impact on that peculiarly American institution, the small liberal arts college. In the following article, Allan Pfnister examines similar challenges the liberal arts college has faced in its 260-year history. Pfnister, a professor of higher education at the University of Denver, notes that the institution has survived past crises by reaffirming its traditional commitment to liberal education.

IN 1977 historian Henry Steele Commager asked, "Can the American college survive?" and used the generic term *college* to apply to independent liberal arts colleges. His voice is but one among many that have raised questions about the future of this institution. Although some independent liberal arts colleges may be going out of existence, the greater threat appears to be not dissolution but transformation. Verne Stadtman of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has stated that there was a distinct trend in the 1970s toward liberal arts colleges becoming comprehensive institutions. Stadtman saw students being diverted from liberal arts into vocational, pre-professional and professional programs and referred to what he called the "impending bankruptcy and failure" of liberal arts colleges because "the liberal arts cannot be served in the special way that is possible when they are virtually the exclusive concern of an institution." He went on to say that "it is for this reason that the conversion of liberal arts institutions into comprehensive institutions primarily engaged in vocational and occupational programs is saddening."

Whether by dissolution or adaptation, the end result may be the same, and one cannot help but wonder if, in the last quarter of the 20th century, we are witnessing the passing of what has long been a peculiarly American form of higher education. Is there no longer a place in the American scheme of things for the single-purpose liberal arts college? To some observers, it seems only a matter of time until, like the dinosaur, the liberal arts college disappears from the scene. To others, the liberal arts college is more like an endangered species that needs to be preserved at all costs in the face of forces bent on its destruction. And even if

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The Liberal Arts College: A Continuing Debate

it is not disappearing but is being transformed, the question is one of how much of its tradition will be preserved.

Whatever its future, the liberal arts college in America has been a study in persistence amid change, continuity amid adaptation. This American college may be unique as an institutional type, persisting as a form of education that has all but disappeared in Western Europe from where it was derived. Structurally, the European universities preceded the arts colleges in development. The early universities of Europe were professional schools that provided training in theology, law and medicine—the so-called “superior” (or “higher”) academic faculties. In the fourth century, the principle was established that students of theology should have preparation in the liberal arts, but when the universities emerged in the 12th century, it was assumed that those entering the “higher” studies would secure their own training in the arts, and no special provisions were made for the beginning students. The first colleges were simply boarding houses. It was later that these colleges developed as residential and instructional entities, designed to prepare younger students in the arts for admission into the advanced faculties that constituted the university proper. Still later, the arts colleges became the basic units of the university structures in France, Germany and England.

Although it was the English college of the late 16th and early 17th centuries that became the informing pattern for the American colonial colleges, the New World institutions were not merely pale imitations of the foundations at Oxford and Cambridge. The arts college as a form took on characteristics imposed by the conditions of settlement in the North American continent. The earlier establishments did not have the endowment, nor the supply of persons to remain as resident fellows, nor the supply of scholars for the program. Employing the necessary variations to meet these deficits, the American colleges still maintained the residential character, the classical curriculum and control over the student life, and acted within the tradition of the ancient liberal arts preparatory schools. The four-year independent residential college with the arts curriculum and baccalaureate degree dominated the American “system” of higher learning from 1636, the year of the founding of Harvard College, into the 1800s, nearly 200 years.

At three points since then, the future of the liberal arts college has been seriously questioned. The first definite challenge was early in the 19th century. The former colonies were being transformed into a nation, the population was pressing into the western frontier, and new communities were springing up almost overnight. Colleges, too, were planted with an almost reckless abandon. The mortality rate was high, but a sufficient number of institutions survived to cause some to refer to America as a “land of colleges.” It was also a time when the shape and purpose of collegiate education in the new nation was a matter of much debate.

The second challenge came at the end of the 19th century. Education in America was taking on new functions and structures: the university was emerging as a distinctive type of institution, and the public secondary schools had reached such a significant place in the education of the citizenry that they were being called “people’s colleges.” To many of the educational leaders of the country, the liberal arts college had become anachronistic; with the increased capability of

The American Review

the secondary school and the development of the technical schools and the university, there seemed little place for a four-year independent college that was neither secondary school nor university.

The third challenge began in the 1970s and continues today. The emphasis in collegiate education increasingly is on vocational preparation, and the comprehensive college/university on the one hand and the community college on the other seem to eliminate the need for an essentially single-purpose institution emphasizing the liberal arts. Furthermore, the traditional college-age population will be decreasing in the 1980s and into the 1990s, and funding is becoming increasingly difficult. The competition for students and funds is growing, and many liberal arts colleges look most vulnerable in the trying times ahead.

In response to the first two challenges, the liberal arts college reaffirmed its dedication to an older tradition and emerged in a stronger position with a clearer sense of purpose. In the first instance, the college remained a dominant force for the next half-century. In the second instance, the college assumed its own position alongside other institutional types in an expanding educational enterprise. The response to the third challenge is still being formulated.

Although the first challenge reached its peak in the second decade of the 19th century, from the beginning there had been a strong measure of pragmatism mixed into the dedication to the older arts tradition. This pragmatism, which was often to come into conflict with the earlier tradition, soon came to the surface. King's College (which later became Columbia University) announced at its founding in 1754 an ambitious intent: courses in surveying, navigation, geography, history and natural philosophy—indeed, “the Knowledge . . . of Everything Useful for the Comfort, the Convenience and the elegance of life.”

The pattern of development of the nation was itself an impetus to the creation of educational institutions that provided an applied rather than a strictly arts preparatory education. In the first half of the 19th century, hundreds of local colleges were created. As the population grew and new settlements opened in the West, an important way of affirming that a pioneer settlement would soon be a great city was, as historian Daniel Boorstin has written, “to provide it as quickly as possible with all of the metropolitan hallmarks, which included not only a newspaper and a hotel, but an institution of higher learning.” No community seemed to be without its college, and as a community-established institution, a college was under pressure to offer courses considered important to the citizens of the community.

Although the tradition of liberal arts, American variation, was strong, modifications were as many as the number of colleges opened. The major variations consisted of adding applied courses of various types, echoing in the 1800s the proud intent of King's College in 1754. New types of colleges were also entering the scene. West Point was created in 1802 as an academy for training the military in engineering. Andover Seminary provided theological instruction outside of the collegiate structure. Normal schools for the training of teachers were under way in the early years of the decade.

Literally thousands of academies were established in the early 1800s. Although these institutions generally are seen as the forerunners of the public high schools, they often paralleled the local liberal arts colleges. The academy empha-

The Liberal Arts College: A Continuing Debate

sis was on the applied; as one academy announced, its purpose was to enable the student "to learn the great end and real business of living." The academy was a private institution but with local and state ties, attuned to the wants of the supporting constituency. With its flexible and applied course of study, it was a strong competitor of the college, often enrolling students of the same age.

In the midst of what seemed to be growing confusion about the role of a college, the Yale Corporation appointed a committee to examine the stance of Yale College. This approach of 150 years ago is not very different from the response of segments of the higher educational establishment of the 1980s. The Yale Committee duly undertook the study, prepared a report, and published its defense in 1828.

The Yale Report has been roundly praised and just as roundly condemned. It has been referred to as a classic restatement of the place of liberal education. It has also been characterized as a most reactionary document, and to one writer it is the document that stopped some of the most exciting possibilities for reform in higher education in the early 19th century. Both estimates are probably overstated. At that time America was facing its technological revolution. The times demanded a statement of the nature of the college and its place in American society.

The Yale Report concentrated upon one facet: the role of the liberal arts college and, in particular, the role of Yale College. The object of the college, it stated, was not to "teach that which is peculiar to any one of the professions" but rather to "lay the foundation which is common to them all." With respect to the applied fields, the report stated that "our course of instruction is not intended to complete an education" because occupations "can never be effectually learned except in the very circumstance in which they are to be practiced." Train the merchant in the counting room, the mechanic in the workshop, and the farmer in the field.

Yale tried to call the academic community back to an older agenda. The European universities by this time had assigned the preparatory curriculum to the secondary level of education, but Yale argued that the preparatory task was still that of the collegiate institution. In the years to come, American higher educational institutions were often to resurrect this debate, and in the 1980s, the from it takes is whether (or how much) general education is properly to be a part of postsecondary education.

Yale's statement had an impact upon other institutions—even as committee and commission announcements and the publication of "ideal" general education patterns have their impact a century and a half later. Yale emerged from the debates of the 1820s a stronger institution, and the advocates of the liberal arts college breathed a bit more easily. Yale had expressed in a straightforward manner what others had attempted (or wished) to say.

But even as the first challenge was met, the second was taking shape. The creation of the new forms and variations in American higher education in no way stopped. Subsequently, Yale and Harvard expanded their programs by creating coordinate and parallel institutions for scientific study, the foundations of which were laid in 1847. These institutions also became the basis for the development of "superior" or "higher" faculties; in 1861, Yale, through its coordinate school,

The American Review

awarded the first American Ph.D.

In Illinois, educator Jonathan B. Turner was campaigning for the establishment of a new group of institutions that would do for the "industrial classes" what the liberal arts colleges were doing for the "intellectual classes." He argued against combining the roles because he was convinced that something more was needed than adding special courses to already existing institutions. Then in 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the "Act Donating Lands for Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts." The act allocated Federal land to each of the states on the condition that its sale provide an endowment for a college "where the leading objects shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies . . . to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanic arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life." And so it was that liberal and practical education were combined and the role of at least one kind of college was defined by Federal policy.

In 1865, the first governing board of Cornell University met in Ithaca, New York, and three years later Cornell opened its doors. Another era in higher education began in an institution designed from the beginning to combine programs in the more classical vein with practical and applied programs.

The year before Cornell opened, 12 citizens of Baltimore, Maryland, established, at the request of one Johns Hopkins, a corporation known as "The Johns Hopkins University." Still another structure was in the making. When the university opened in 1876, it launched American higher education on the way to research and graduate study of a remarkable quality. In 1902, at the retirement of Daniel Coit Gilman, the first president of Johns Hopkins, the president of another institution with a much longer history, Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, spoke of Gilman's achievement as "the creation of a school of graduate studies which not only has been in itself a strong and potent school, but which has lifted every other university in the country in its departments of arts and sciences." The shape of American higher education had been changed. Clark University in Massachusetts had followed Hopkins (1888), and the University of Chicago came soon after (1892). And the old institutions were changing as well, with Harvard, Yale and Columbia becoming more complex and moving from college to university through the development of specialized faculties and studies.

The development of the American university was overdue; the needs of the country and the expansion of knowledge demanded it. But its structure did not develop naturally; there was much debate over the shape it would take. There were those who saw the German university, exclusively professional and technical in orientation, as the model. Others wanted to retain the tempering character of the traditional liberal arts education, although in a form different from the four-year structure that had characterized the liberal arts college for over 200 years. If the model of the German university had prevailed, the liberal arts college would have remained as the preparatory institution, and the university would have concentrated upon research and professional preparation; the college might have evolved as an advanced secondary school. As it was, a variation of the "tempering" view prevailed, and the university combined certain aspects

The Liberal Arts College: A Continuing Debate

of the liberal arts preparatory course and the advanced study of the continental university.

Many historians of American higher education have referred to the period beginning with the end of the 19th century as the "age of the university", and imply thereby that the role of the college had been eclipsed, that what happened from that point on was more in reaction to the university or inspired by the university. But the effect of the new development seemed rather to strengthen the resolve of these colleges to reaffirm their historic roles. Instead of disappearing as had been predicted, the independent liberal arts colleges continued to grow in number and enrollment. The crisis at the turn of the century appeared to have passed, and the colleges were establishing a niche for themselves in a postsecondary educational commonwealth that was becoming increasingly variegated and complex. No longer the dominant institutional type, but becoming a minority member, the colleges had more than survived.

The third challenge began as a continuation of the second challenge, but appears to have grown in force during the 1970s. The years following World War II saw significant shifts in the higher education commonwealth. In 1947, the President's Commission on Higher Education was giving voice to the view that higher education was to become the means "by which every citizen, youth and adult, is enabled and encouraged to carry his education, formal and informal, as far as his native capacities permit." Beginning in 1944 with the GI Bill, which funded the educations of nearly 2.5 million World War II U.S. veterans, the Federal government entered into a commitment to broaden educational opportunities for the American public. There was another change. Before the war, research sponsored by the Federal government in colleges and universities was almost entirely limited to research specifically directed toward agricultural purposes. In 1940 Federal expenditure for research in universities was about \$13 million with virtually all of it devoted to agriculture and distributed by the Department of Agriculture. Ten years later, at least 14 Federal agencies were sponsoring research in colleges and universities, the Federal expenditures had reached \$150 million, and the amount continued to climb. The environment in which the liberal arts college found itself was changing radically again.

Lewis Mayhew began his 1962 volume on *The Smaller Liberal Arts College* with these words: "For half a century it has been predicted that the privately supported liberal arts college will soon disappear from the American educational scene. Yet the college, rooted in American civilization, continues to exist and to educate an appreciable percentage of students seeking higher education." But the colleges were facing a difficult time. As Mayhew saw it, they were attempting to carry on the liberal tradition in the face of the vocational orientation of much of American life. They were small autonomous institutions in a world in which large centralized institutions were increasingly characteristic of American higher education. They had come to view their smallness and independence as important to their tradition, yet the very growth in human knowledge demanded ever-growing variety in curriculum.

A report sponsored by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1969 listed the ways in which the "good college" would meet the future: (1) by intricate and active engagement in a network of educational opportunities be-

The American Review

yond its old campus boundaries, (2) by the variety of its students and the large responsibilities these students will carry in the tasks of education, administration, research and public service, (3) by the colorful and diverse careers of its faculty, (4) by the individualization, the sophistication and the rich rewards of its life of learning, and (5) by the complexity of purposes that will enliven its learning and teaching. The authors found little support for the maintenance of the single-purpose arts college and suggested that the effective liberal arts college would become more comprehensive in nature and program. The words are hauntingly similar to those of Verne Stadtman, quoted earlier, when he described in 1980 what appears actually to have happened during the 1970s.

In 1971, Eric Ashby referred to the "bewildering diversity of prestige and purpose" among the undergraduate colleges. He observed that the prime purpose of most professional education in universities is fairly clear and that feedback from the professions constantly reviews and refines this purpose. Similarly, the prime purposes of the community college and of vocational courses in the state colleges seem clear. But, he states, "the prime purpose of the liberal arts bachelor course in a four-year college is not clear any longer, and in many colleges the concentration on preparing students to enter professional schools makes it difficult... for those colleges to develop an independent and indigenous curriculum."

However, it may be too easy to attribute the crisis of the liberal arts college to lack of clarity of purpose. Indeed, the crisis may be precisely because some of these colleges have tried to be clear in their adherence to an ancient tradition of the liberal arts preparatory curriculum—nonprofessional and nonvocational—providing the basic grounding in the meaning of one's culture and the skills in analysis and presentation that are deemed prerequisite to successful pursuit of professional and advanced study. The problem may be that the changing character of American postsecondary education, its structure and its heterogeneous clientele, leaves limited room for a four-year structure devoted primarily to liberal education. In the early years of the 20th century, there were those who argued that, even at that time, two years was quite enough to devote to liberal education, and Harvard, in effect, had reduced its undergraduate course to three years.

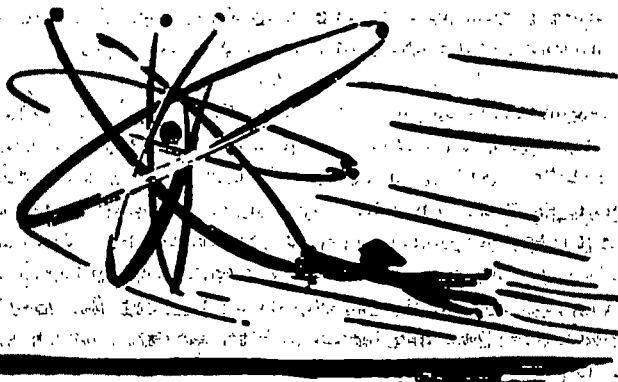
The issue perhaps is whether in the 1980s the American "system" is inclined to support, except for a select few, a four-year postsecondary liberal arts curriculum. Harvard President James Bryant Conant raised this question in a different way in the early 1950s. In an essay entitled "The American College: How It Grew," he wrote that in the United States experimentation with various types of courses constituted attempts to find a modern equivalent of the liberal education that was once the product of the first American colleges. But the earlier colleges were developed for the few, and, he asked, "are we sure that full-time education up to the age of 21 or 22 is beneficial for all types of individuals?" Or as Joseph Ben-David observed in 1972, herein is the American dilemma, for "college education in the United States was not meant for the selected few, and was certainly not meant to be a selection process."

The challenge of the early 1900s is back, but this third challenge has renewed force in a time of falling enrollments and declining revenues. However, it is not so much a question of lack of clarity of "prime purpose" among the liberal arts

The Liberal Arts College: A Continuing Debate

colleges, but rather a matter of the role those colleges will be permitted to play in the postsecondary commonwealth of the future. The pressures have been building since the turn of the century, and some of the colleges have responded by opting for changed mission and expanded roles. In 1828 and the years following, the majority of the colleges seemed prepared to relate to the pattern defined by Yale, even after Yale became a university with a university college. In the 1880s and the years following, the majority of the colleges seemed determined to retain their historic position, although some did evolve into universities and some went out of existence. However, if the Carnegie Commission classification scheme can be given credence, in the six years between 1970 and 1976 nearly 20 percent of the liberal arts colleges in the United States had become something other than what they had been. A significant juncture seems to have been reached.

What does the future hold? Few past efforts at prediction have been very successful. Although threatened before, the liberal arts college has survived by reaffirming its dedication to an older tradition, and has emerged from previous crises in a stronger position with a clearer sense of purpose. The response to the present challenge is still in process. A substantial segment of the colleges seems to have moved into more comprehensive forms, and others have again reaffirmed an earlier tradition in terms appropriate to the 20th century. The final returns are not in yet. □



The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

By CHRISTOPHER JENCKS

During the 1970s many Americans came to believe that the economic well-being they had enjoyed since World War II was on the decline. Yet, according to sociologist Christopher Jencks, in such areas as health, housing, transportation and nutrition, "the average American family was better off in 1980 than in 1970." The public's perception of the '70s, he explains, was based on a few widely quoted economic statistics which tended to highlight the negative factors and ignore or understate the decade's rising prosperity. Jencks, a professor of sociology and urban affairs at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, has written *Who Gets Ahead? The Economic Determinants of Success in America* (1979).

BY now it is commonly accepted by almost everyone that the long economic boom which began in the United States after World War II petered out in the early 1970s. Inflation accelerated, unemployment rose, productivity stagnated, and after adjustments for inflation, real wages fell. As a result, Americans had to run hard just to stand still, and the dream of a steadily rising standard of living evaporated.

The most widely cited evidence for this view is probably the U.S. Census Bureau's annual report on trends in family income. This report, published every year since 1948, always begins by comparing the change in median family income during the previous year to the change in the Consumer Price Index. This comparison shows that "real" family income, which had risen 38 percent during the 1950s and 34 percent during the 1960s, rose only 0.4 percent during the 1970s.

Such statistics have been widely cited in political debate. Conservatives have invoked them to show that the United States can no longer afford the luxury of a large welfare state or policies aimed at economic redistribution, and that increased government intervention in the economy during the 1960s and 1970s had a negative effect on subsequent economic growth. Liberals and radicals have invoked precisely the same statistics to show that the private economy is being mismanaged and that the United States needs a government-sponsored "industrial policy" to promote economic growth.

But Census statistics on family income do not describe what happened to the American standard of living during the 1970s at all accurately. Whereas Census statistics imply that the standard of living stagnated during the 1970s, more direct measures of material well-being often showed marked improvement, and

The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

some showed as much improvement during the 1970s as during the supposedly more affluent 1950s and 1960s. This does not mean that the economy as a whole was healthy during the 1970s. It was not. But despite high inflation and high unemployment, the average American family was better off in 1980 than in 1970. To demonstrate this I will focus on four areas: health, housing, transportation and food consumption.

Life expectancy is the most widely used measure of a nation's health. Estimates of life expectancy tell us how long people could expect to live if current death rates were to prevail in the future. U S life expectancy rose steadily between 1950 and 1980—from 68.2 years to 73.7—but the increase during the 1970s was much larger than during the 1950s or 1960s. Indeed, life expectancy rose more during the 1970s than during the 1950s and 1960s combined.

Rising life expectancy during the 1970s was not the result of any single medical breakthrough, like antibiotics in the 1940s. Death rates fell for a wide range of diseases, and in all age groups. The fact that fewer people died from heart disease was the most important single reason for the overall increase in life expectancy, but there were also fewer deaths from many other causes, ranging from pneumonia to accidents.

Another widely cited index of a nation's health is infant mortality, which includes deaths during the first 12 months after birth. Like life expectancy, infant mortality in the United States improved more during the 1970s than it had during the 1950s or 1960s. Indeed, the decline in infant mortality accounted for almost a fifth of the overall increase in life expectancy during the 1970s.

In the area of housing, the median price of a new single-family home rose from \$23,400 in 1970 to \$64,600 in 1980, and mortgage rates rose from 8.5 percent to 12.7 percent. Other things being equal, this meant that the monthly mortgage payment on a new American house more than quadrupled. Family income rose at only half this rate, so the burden of financing a new home doubled. According to conventional wisdom, this increase put home ownership beyond the reach of most families.

Such statistics tell only part of the story, however. While interest rates rose during the 1970s, inflation rose even faster, so that the "real" interest rate (nominal interest minus inflation) became negative. As a result, those who bought a house could expect its value to increase more in most years than they paid out for interest on their mortgage. For all practical purposes, therefore, interest payments on residential mortgages became a form of saving. Such payments were a particularly attractive form of saving because they were tax-deductible. And when owners chose to convert such savings to cash by selling their homes, the profits were subject to extraordinarily favorable tax treatment. As a result, the true cost of home ownership was far lower than the nominal cost.

While home ownership became more widespread during the 1970s—64.4 percent of all American households owned their own homes in 1980, compared to 62.9 percent in 1970—it was increasingly confined to affluent families. Until the 1970s much of the urban middle class had rented apartments, while a lot of poorer rural families had owned their own homes. But as down payments and monthly costs rose, only families that were willing and able to save a substantial fraction of their current income could afford to enter the housing market. And as the

The American Review

profits available in this market rose, everyone who *could* afford to enter the market did so. As a result, home ownership became increasingly correlated with income. In 1970 home owners' median income had been only 53 percent higher than that of renters. By 1980 the difference was 89 percent.

While home ownership is an important political symbol, renters often live better than owners with comparable incomes. As a result, trends in home ownership do not necessarily tell us as much about housing conditions as other measures like the size of homes.

The typical American home had 4.9 rooms in 1960, 5.0 rooms in 1970 and 5.1 rooms in 1980. Taken at face value, these figures suggest that crowding declined (or spaciousness increased) by the same amount during the 1970s as during the 1960s. But the number of people in the typical household fell more during the 1970s than during the 1960s, so the number of rooms per person rose more during the 1970s than during the 1960s.

Ideally, we would also like to have historical data on leaky roofs, unreliable plumbing, broken windows, flaking paint and so forth, but we do not seem to have them. The age of the housing stock is the most widely used proxy for such problems. America built very little housing during the 1930s and 1940s. To make up for this deficit the nation built an enormous amount in the 1950s. As a result, there was little overall change in the age of the housing stock between 1960 and 1980.

Household equipment is also important to most families. Such appliances as television sets, air conditioners and dishwashers have a natural "product cycle" that largely determines the rate at which they spread. When a household convenience is first introduced, nobody has had firsthand experience with it, distribution and service networks are thin, and it spreads slowly. Once an appreciable number of affluent families have bought a useful item on an experimental basis, however, word about its usefulness spreads, and most families that can easily afford the item acquire it. This is the period of most rapid diffusion. Once all the families that can easily afford the item have it, further diffusion depends on increases in real income, which come relatively slowly. But if economic growth continues, and if the distribution of income remains stable, as it has since World War II in America, almost all families that want an item will eventually get it. At that point further diffusion becomes impossible.

Color television, which was introduced in 1959 but spread relatively slowly during the 1960s, illustrates the early part of the product cycle. It spread much more rapidly during the 1970s, since by then most stations were broadcasting in color, and color was universally accepted as better than black-and-white. Plumbing and telephones illustrate the last part of the product cycle. Almost all American households had complete plumbing and a telephone by 1970, so these items could not possibly have spread as quickly during the 1970s as they had during the 1960s. Nonetheless installation of new plumbing and telephones continued, and these amenities became standard even in very poor households.

As these examples illustrate, the rate at which a given item spreads in a given decade depends to a great extent on when it was introduced. Clothes dryers, air conditioners and dishwashers were introduced and spread relatively slowly in the 1950s. They spread faster during the 1960s, when almost everyone who could

The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

easily afford them bought them. They spread somewhat slower during the 1970s, since by then their spread required increases in purchasing power as well as increases in consumer acceptance of the product. Clothes washers, in contrast, were already widespread by 1960.

The data on household conveniences, crowding and the age of housing units suggest that housing conditions, broadly conceived, improved about as much during the 1970s as during the 1960s.

Private automobiles, to consider another measure of well-being, have been the backbone of the American transportation system since World War II, and access to automobiles has therefore been the main determinant of how easily people can move from one place to another. The best measure of access to automobiles is probably the ratio of registered passenger cars to persons over 16. This ratio is roughly equivalent to the percentage of potential drivers with a car at their disposal, and in 1980 about 73 percent of adults had a car compared to 65 percent in 1970.

The relatively slow increase in access to automobiles during the 1970s was only partly traceable to budget constraints. While there were still some people who wanted automobiles and did not have them in 1980, the market was approaching saturation. Hardly any household wants more than one car per adult. This means that the ratio of cars to adults is never likely to exceed 100 percent. In practice, there are a lot of people who don't want even one car. Some people are too old, too sick or too timid to drive. Others, especially in New York City, find it easier to take taxis or public transportation than to cope with endless parking problems. Some urban couples find that one car meets their needs and that a second car is just a nuisance to maintain. Thus even if real income had doubled or tripled during the 1970s, the ratio of cars to adults would probably not have risen above 85 or 90 percent, and it might not even have gone that high.

In most respects cars became more comfortable during the 1970s. Air conditioning, tinted glass, power windows, power brakes and stereophonic sound systems were all more common in 1980 than in 1970. The spread of such luxury items makes it hard to believe that people bought smaller cars simply because they could not afford rising fuel costs. Rather, high fuel costs made big trunks and rear seats more expensive than air conditioning, stereo equipment and the like, and people adjusted their buying habits accordingly.

Cars also got older during the 1970s. In the 1950s and 1960s many affluent families traded in their car every year or two. By the 1970s this practice was far less common. Of course, trade-ins did not go to the junkyard even in the 1950s and 1960s. Less affluent families bought and drove second-hand cars until the cost of maintaining them exceeded the cost of replacing them, and this remains true today. In assessing the condition of U.S. automobiles we therefore need to focus on their median age, not on the length of time that particular families keep particular cars. But the median age of American passenger cars rose during the 1970s, from 5.6 years in 1970 to 6.6 years in 1980. Partly because cars were not being driven as far each year they lasted longer. In addition, manufacturers began putting more emphasis on minimizing maintenance costs in the 1970s, which may have made cars last longer.

All in all, the transportation picture is quite mixed. More adults had a car at

their disposal in 1980 than in 1970, but they drove their cars slightly less. Cars were more luxurious in most respects, but they were less spacious. The typical car was older, but we do not know if it was less reliable. Overall, the data suggest some improvement in the ease and comfort with which Americans moved about, but not a lot. Automobile transportation certainly did not improve as much during the 1970s as during the 1960s or 1950s.

The question of food consumption in the 1970s is complex because there is no general agreement about how to measure the quality of what people eat. Nutritional experts evaluate what people eat in terms of its real or imagined medical consequences, while economists ask whether people can afford to eat what they want to eat. The nutritional approach takes no account of how food tastes or of the loss people experience when deprived of things that are bad for them. In addition, the nutritional approach is handicapped by the fact that expert opinion about what people ought to eat is divided and constantly changing.

When nutrition experts try to evaluate the overall adequacy of a nation's diet, they typically calculate caloric and protein intake per capita. These measures are quite useful in poor countries where a large portion of the population does not get enough to eat. They are less useful in rich countries, where most people get enough to eat and a great many people eat more than they should. In such countries progress may involve reducing caloric and protein intake, not increasing it. Nonetheless, trends in caloric and protein intake are of some interest even in rich countries.

In order to measure trends in food consumption meaningfully, we must take account of the changing age distribution of the population. Caloric intake per person fell from 1950 to 1960 in the United States, for example. This decline occurred not because adults ate less in 1960 but because there were more children in 1960, and children—at least small ones—eat less than adults. In an effort to minimize this particular problem, I have assumed that children under 16 typically eat half as much as adults and have calculated food consumption per "adult equivalent" instead of per person.

By that method of calculation both caloric and protein intake per adult equivalent fell during the 1970s. The apparent decline in caloric intake is so small that it could easily be due to inadequate age standardization or other errors. The fall in daily protein intake (from 120 to 115 grams) is larger and is probably genuine. It is tempting to attribute this decline to hard times, but the actual reasons are more complicated.

Most Americans have eaten too much for decades. This does not mean no one goes hungry in America, but it does mean that overeating is more common than undereating. Americans became increasingly concerned about this problem during the 1970s. Exercise became fashionable, and diet books were constant best sellers. Doctors urged their patients to lose weight, and especially to reduce their intake of cholesterol. Under these circumstances we cannot automatically assume that people cut their food consumption just to save money. They may have been more interested in saving their lives.

One way to assess the relative impact of money and medical advice on food consumption is to look at what people stopped eating. The consumption of meat, milk and eggs fell during the 1970s. Since all these items are high on cholesterol,

The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

it is tempting to assume that people ate less of them to cut down on cholesterol. But meat, milk and eggs are also expensive, so the test is hardly conclusive. Fish is a better test. If cost were crucial, fish consumption should also have declined, since fish prices are now even higher than meat prices. If health were critical, fish consumption should have risen relative to meat, since fish contains less cholesterol than meat. In fact, fish consumption remained constant, while meat consumption fell, suggesting that health considerations outweighed monetary ones. If cost cutting had been uppermost in people's minds, we would also expect to see a shift from green and yellow vegetables to potatoes. In fact, the trend was the other way. Consumption of refined sugar also fell sharply during the 1970s. All these changes suggest that health considerations had more impact on what Americans ate than economic considerations did.

Another way to decide why food consumption fell is to ask *who* cut back. If economic factors were critical, we would expect to find cutbacks among the poor. If health and appearance were critical, we would expect cutbacks primarily among the middle classes. We do not have reliable national data on who ate what prior to 1970. But the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHNES) gathered such data between 1971 and 1974 and again between 1976 and 1980. Comparing the two surveys, we find that those above the poverty line slightly reduced their consumption of both calories and protein during the 1970s. Those below the poverty line, in contrast, hardly changed their protein consumption and increased their caloric intake. The same pattern recurs when we compare whites to blacks. It seems unlikely that the middle classes would reduce their food consumption because of budgetary stringency. Other expenditures, such as those on bigger houses, would surely be cut first. It seems more likely that middle-class food consumption declined because of concern about health and appearance.

If we take an economic rather than a nutritional view of food, official statistics again suggest that consumption fell slightly during the 1970s. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) food price index measures what it would have cost in 1980 to buy the market basket that shoppers bought in earlier years. Food expenditure per adult equivalent, including eating out, averaged \$33 a week in 1980. If shoppers had tried to buy the same mix of food in 1980 that they bought in 1970, BLS figures indicated that they would have had to spend \$24 a week. But shoppers *didn't* buy the same mix of groceries in 1980 as in 1970, for two reasons. First, the relative prices of certain foods had changed, which led shoppers to shift their pattern of purchases in order to get better value per dollar. As a result, shoppers could buy a market basket they regarded as comparable to their 1970 market basket for somewhat less than \$34. More important, tastes had changed in ways I have already discussed.

How are we to assess these developments? If we take the conventional economic viewpoint, there was little change in the level of food consumption between 1970 and 1980.

From a nutritional point of view, however, the important changes between 1970 and 1980 were those that economists attribute to "taste." From a nutritional perspective the fact that people bought less meat, sugar, milk and eggs in 1980 reflected not just the vagaries of "taste" but the fact that people had more infor-

The American Review

mation about the effects of eating these foods. Putting the point slightly differently, we can say that while the changes in food consumption between 1970 and 1980 would have looked like a change for the worse from the point of view of shoppers in 1970, who were relatively uninformed about the perils of self-indulgence, they probably looked like a considerable improvement from the point of view of shoppers in 1980, who were somewhat better informed.

The evidence I have reviewed on health, housing, transportation and food hardly suggests that the 1970s were an economic catastrophe. Health improved more during the 1970s than during either the 1950s or 1960s. Housing improved at about the same rate as during the 1950s and 1960s. Transportation improved less rapidly than during the 1950s and 1960s, but it did improve. Food consumption fell slightly during the 1970s, but this drop appears to have been due primarily to increased concern with appearance and health. Ideally, it would be helpful to assemble analogous information about other areas of material well-being, such as clothing, home furnishings, recreation, vacations and the like. In the absence of such data, however, the evidence regarding health, housing and transportation suggests that we should scrutinize the Census Bureau's family-income statistics more carefully. When we do this, three issues emerge as crucial: the proper correction for inflation, the proper way to define and measure income, and the proper correction for changes in family size.

The Census Bureau has always used the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to correct its income statistics for inflation. By now almost every expert agrees that the CPI exaggerated inflation during the 1970s because it treated the costs of home ownership in a very misleading way. In January 1983 the housing component of the CPI was revised. Like its counterparts in other countries, the CPI now measures housing costs by measuring rents. This method seems entirely reasonable. A "cost of living" index should measure the cost of living in a house, not the cost of investing in housing. Unfortunately, the published values of the CPI for years prior to 1983 have not been revised to incorporate this new approach. As a result, they still exaggerate the amount of inflation during the 1970s.

To get a somewhat more accurate picture of the rate of inflation, the Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) has for many years constructed its own deflator for converting what it calls Personal Consumption Expenditure (PCE) to constant dollars. The PCE deflator uses the same basic price data as the CPI, but it uses changes in rents to estimate changes in the price of housing, and it uses a slightly different set of weights to determine the relative importance of different items. When we measure income in "PCE dollars," median family income still rose three percent per year during the 1950s and 1960s, but it also rose one percent per year during the 1970s. Substituting the PCE deflator for the CPI thus reduces the apparent difference between the 1970s and the two previous decades by a third.

But even the PCE deflator exaggerates the impact of inflation because some of the goods and services available in 1980 were not available at *any* price in 1970. If we value these goods and services by asking what they would have been worth if they had been available, the answer is sometimes that they would have been worth staggering sums. In 1978, for example, my prematurely born son's life was saved by a drug that did not exist in 1970. In order to estimate the change

The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

in my "standard of living" due to this invention, one must calculate the amount of income that would have been needed to compensate me for the absence of the drug in 1970. Since *no* amount of income would have done this, my standard of living was "infinitely" higher in 1978 than it would have been in 1970 had my son been born then.

Conventional cost-of-living indices do not even try to take account of such technical innovations. As a result, we can seldom say anything meaningful about the rate of inflation in areas where technical innovation is important. The Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates inflation in medical prices, for example, largely on the basis of changes in what physicians and hospitals charge for their services. BLS does not try to determine whether physicians' and hospitals' services improve as their charges rise. If, for example, it took the same number of physician visits and the same number of hospital days to treat Hodgkin's disease in 1980 as in 1960, and if the cost of the course of treatment rose 200 percent, BLS would register 200 percent inflation. No correction would be made for the fact that most patients with Hodgkin's disease died in 1960, whereas they were mostly cured in 1980. The national income accounts exhibit comparable myopia. To get a more reasonable approximation of people's intuitions about the value of medical services, we would have to estimate "cost per cure" instead of "cost per treatment."

Similar problems arise in other areas. If people spent the same amount on home air conditioners in 1980 as on electric fans, cool drinks and trips to air-conditioned theaters in 1950, but were cooler in 1980 than in 1950, we ought logically to conclude that the price of staying cool had fallen. But our accounting system does not even try to measure the price of coolness, any more than it measures the price of health. The benefits of many technical innovations get lost as a result. This anomaly means we tend to overestimate inflation and underestimate the rate of improvement in the standard of living. Whether this bias was more serious in the 1970s than in earlier decades is unclear.

The concept of family income itself should be considered. The Census Bureau estimates family income by interviewing any "responsible" individual who is at home when the interviewer arrives. The interviewer asks this informant to estimate every household member's pretax money income from earnings, self-employment, dividends, interest, rent and various kinds of transfer payments. Needless to say, this procedure leads to a certain amount of error. The bureau periodically compares the total amount of income its respondents say they received from each source to the amount that relevant organizations say they paid out. This means comparing reported interest income to reported interest payments, reported wage income to reported wage payments and so forth. These comparisons suggest that the respondents reported 84 percent of all money income in 1950, 87 percent in 1960, 88 percent in 1970 and 89 percent in 1980. If the Census Bureau were to correct its family-income series for underreporting, the apparent rate of income growth would fall in all three decades, but the fall would be noticeable only for the 1950s.

The Census Bureau's reliance on pretax income poses more serious problems. First, some income is counted twice. Pretax income is also likely to be misleading because governments spend a lot of their tax receipts on what economists call

"intermediate" goods—goods that businesses use to make other goods—rather than on "final" goods for consumers. Highways are often used in this way. Including expenditures on "intermediate" goods when we calculate trends in the standard of living is a form of double counting.

Personal taxes rose faster than money income throughout the postwar period. But taxes rose fastest during the 1950s, somewhat slower during the 1960s and slower yet during the 1970s. This may surprise those who think of the 1950s as a period of fiscal conservatism. The image is correct in that legislators financed almost all government spending from taxes rather than borrowing during the 1950s. But it is incorrect if it implies that legislators refused to raise taxes during the 1950s. Defense spending rose from five percent to nine percent of GNP between 1950 and 1960. In addition, suburbanization and the baby boom led to enormous increases in state and local spending on highways and education during this decade. As a result, pretax income, which is what people report to the Census Bureau, rose more than after-tax ("disposable") income during the 1950s.

While we must subtract personal taxes from income in order to avoid double counting, we must also add back something for the value of the free services that governments provide to individuals. When higher taxes provide better schools, cleaner air, better recreation facilities or shorter driving time to visit friends and relatives, these improvements constitute income "in kind" to individuals. Estimating the value of these government services poses difficult conceptual and empirical problems. Economist Robert Eisner's estimates indicate that the value of government services to individuals, including both investment in their "human capital" (such as schooling) and expenditures on current services (such as parks), rose faster during the 1960s, slower during the 1970s and slowest of all during the 1950s.

When we adjust reported pretax income for underreporting, taxes and the value of government services, we see that total "true" income grew at exactly the same rate as the total reported to the Census Bureau during the 1970s, namely 3.3 percent a year. True income grew somewhat less than Census income (4.3 percent) during the 1960s, however, and a lot less in the 1950s (3.1 percent). The effect of these adjustments is not, then, to make the 1970s look better than they do in the Census Bureau's family-income series, but to make earlier decades look worse.

Finally, in order to make national income statistics like these tell us anything meaningful about the standard of living, some adjustment for the changing size of the population is obviously crucial. The Census Bureau restricts the term "family" to groups of two or more related individuals living in the same household. This means that Census statistics on "family income" do not cover individuals who live alone or with nonrelatives. The Census Bureau publishes a separate series covering such "unrelated individuals," but neither the bureau nor anyone else pays much attention to this series. Since unrelated individuals constitute a growing fraction of the total population, and since their median income rose a lot faster than median family income in the 1970s, ignoring them can be quite misleading. The Census Bureau also reports family income without making any adjustment for family size: Since families averaged 3.6 people in 1950, 3.7 people in 1960, 3.6 people in 1970, and 3.3 people in 1980, failing to adjust for family

The Hidden Prosperity of the 1970s

size makes the 1970s look worse than they were. Unfortunately, there is no one ideal procedure for adjusting income statistics to take account of variations in family size. The correct adjustment depends on whether you want to measure the material standard of living or psychological well-being, and on whether you look at the problem from the perspective of adults or children.

If our aim is to measure adults' psychological well-being, the best thing to do about children is probably to ignore them. Most adults have children because they want them. If they don't want children, they use contraceptives, get abortions, place their unwanted children for adoption or leave home. Adults presumably spend money on children because they get more satisfaction from such expenditures than from alternative uses of the money. Because this is so, it makes no more sense to say that having children lowers an adult's subjective standard of living than to say that owning a yacht does. Children are expensive, and having children leaves less money for other things, but that is true of a yacht, too.

It follows that if our goal is to measure trends in adults' satisfaction with their income, we can ignore the fact that people had more children in the 1950s than in the 1970s. From this perspective the best measure of economic welfare is income per adult. This measure rose only 1.2 percent a year during the 1970s, compared to 2.0 percent a year during the 1950s and 2.7 percent a year during the 1960s. Using this approach, therefore, the 1970s look somewhat better than in the Census Bureau's family-income series, but they still look worse than the 1950s and 1960s.

For many purposes, however, we care about trends in adults' *material* well-being, not trends in their *subjective* well-being. The line between the two is fuzzy, but there is surely a distinction. Spaghetti eaten with people you love may be more satisfying than steak eaten alone, but outside observers are still likely to say that a society in which everyone eats steak enjoys a higher level of material well-being than a society in which everyone eats spaghetti, no matter how miserable the steak-eaters are. If we want to measure adults' material well-being in this sense, we must subtract out the money adults spend on their children and consider only what they spend on themselves.

If we assume that adults spend two-thirds as much on children as on themselves, we can estimate trends in material well-being by counting children as two-thirds of an adult and calculating trends in income per "adult equivalent." This measure of material well-being rose 1.9 percent a year during the 1970s, compared to 3.0 percent a year during the 1960s and 1.5 percent during the 1950s. The increase in adults' material consumption was thus greater during the 1970s than during the 1950s, though still less than during the 1960s.

The reader may wonder why, if the material standard of living in the United States really rose significantly during the 1970s, so few people noticed. The answer, I think, is that inflation had a profoundly disruptive effect on the nation's psychic economy. Since nominal income was rising very rapidly, many consumers felt that they "ought" to be able to afford a lot more things. They had, after all, "earned" their pay increases. When their purchasing power rose only one or two percent a year they felt cheated, even though increases of this magnitude have been the historical norm. Since everything about the economy was changing at once, consumers also had great difficulty finding benchmarks against which to

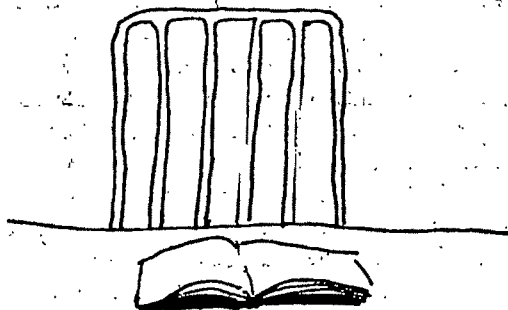


The American Review

evaluate their progress. When some prices rise 50 percent and others rise 300 percent, it is bound to be hard to tell whether an income increase of 100 percent leaves you ahead of inflation or behind.

Popular images of the American economy were almost uniformly negative during the 1970s. Inflation made people feel that the economy was out of control. The narrowing of America's technological advantage also made American exports less competitive and encouraged imports, though overvaluation of the dollar probably played as large a role in these developments as technological change.

At the close of the 1970s all sides seemed to agree that, regardless of the facts, the country was in serious economic trouble. And good economic news no longer played much of a role in the political rhetoric even when it was available. □



MOMA : Touchstone of Taste

By HILTON KRAMER

Since its founding in 1929, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City has accumulated what most cognoscenti consider the preeminent collection of 20th-century art. In 1984 a new MOMA opened its doors after an extensive, four-year rebuilding program aimed at increasing the space available for exhibiting these works. In the following essay former *New York Times* art critic Hilton Kramer assesses the new building's strengths and weaknesses, and discusses MOMA's continuing role as a pantheon of modernism. Currently the editor of *The New Criterion*, Kramer has written two books on the modern art scene: *The Age of the Avant-Garde: An Art Chronicle of 1956-72* and *The Revenge of the Philistines: Art and Culture, 1972-1982*.

THE Museum of Modern Art has long been regarded—and has long regarded itself—as the greatest institution of its kind in the world. Its collections are acknowledged to be unrivaled in quality and number, and for more than half a century its exhibition program together with the publications that derive from it has played a crucial role in shaping our understanding of what, in fact, the very notion of “modern art” may be said to encompass. From the outset, moreover, the museum undertook to define its interests in broad terms, embracing not only painting, sculpture and the graphic arts, but also architecture, photography, industrial design and film. In this respect, too, MOMA (as it has come to be called) has exerted an immense influence. For other institutions in the field it has served as something of a model and inspiration, and for its large and constantly expanding public it has served as a source of pleasure and instruction as well as a touchstone of taste and certification. So central has been its role in defining both the standards and the scope of modern art that the museum's own activities and ideas have in themselves come to constitute a distinct chapter in the cultural history which MOMA was originally conceived to monitor, to document, to pass judgment upon, to preserve.

It was to be expected, then, that the reopening of the museum in May 1984 would be an event of historic importance. After all, for the better part of four years MOMA has been more of an absence than a presence on the art scene. Giving full priority to its long-awaited rebuilding and expansion program, the museum pretty much ceased to be what it had been for half a century—the central reference point for anyone seriously interested in the history of modern art. With its collections either dispatched to other venues or locked up in storage and its exhibition schedule drastically curtailed, MOMA gradually became something of a ghost of its former existence. Expectations for its return were made all the high-

er by the promise of a "rew" MOMA—a transformed museum boasting a glittering new building, with vastly expanded facilities both for the installation of the permanent collections that are MOMA's greatest glory and for the temporary shows that have been so essential a part of its contribution to contemporary cultural life. And it assuredly is a new MOMA—a museum not only greatly enlarged physically but significantly altered in its general outlook and spirit.

Much that museum-goers cherish in the old MOMA remains as it was, and at times looks even better than one remembered. Certainly a great effort has been made, especially in the galleries devoted to the permanent collection of painting and sculpture, to concentrate (as the museum always has) on quality—the best of the art that the modern era has bequeathed to us—and to confer upon our intercourse with this art that special feeling of intimacy and awe many gratefully recall from years of attendance at the old MOMA. Yet there is no avoiding the fact that a great many changes have gone into the making of the new MOMA, and the most important of these is the revised perspective it now brings to modern art itself.

For the new MOMA is a museum even more deeply entrenched than hitherto in the history of modern art and in modern art as history. It is also a museum now governed by a sharper and more narrowly defined view of that history than formerly obtained in the museum. Its outlook may best be characterized, I think, as art-historical formalism, and it is in the nature of the strengths and the weaknesses of this outlook that it serves as a better guide to some kinds of art than to others, and that it is generally more useful in charting the art-historical past than in coming to grips with the present. For as a means of dealing with the present, this formalist outlook tends to lead to a false orthodoxy. And attempts to compensate for, or guard against, such orthodoxy tend, in turn, to lead to a virtual abandonment of any discernible standards.

At least as far as painting and sculpture are concerned—the principal interest of the new MOMA, as they were of the old—the museum now reveals itself to be an institution that finds it increasingly difficult to get its bearings in a contemporary art scene that does not lend itself to the fixed ideas and tidy categories of the formalist outlook. The division separating MOMA's role as a custodian and codifier of history from its other role as an arbiter of contemporary taste has been the source of a built-in conflict in museum policy from the very beginning. It is not the problem itself that is new, but the extent to which history has now given it a new dimension and thereby rendered it all but unmanageable.

What is really new in the new MOMA is not so much the added space the museum has acquired—important as that may be—as the way it has utilized that space as a means of institutionalizing this categorical separation of the past from the present. As a result, the new MOMA is no longer a single museum with a unified purpose and outlook, but two (or more) museums which pursue vastly different objectives and uphold very different standards.

All of this is plainly legible in the design of the new MOMA. Here again, in the very disposition of the museum's new space, the policy of making a sharp distinction between the parts of the museum in which we are intended to view modern art as history and those in which we are left to deal with contemporary art as an element of a new and uncoded cultural experience has been elevated to the

level of a structural principle. There may even be a certain symbolism in the way visitors to the museum are obliged to ascend—to the second, third and fourth stories—in order to commune with the certified masterworks of modern art, whereas they must descend from these higher elevations to the lower levels of the building in order to study the “temporary” productions garnered from the current art scene.

I do not mean to mock this policy. There are few alternative courses open to a museum that invests so large a portion of its space and resources in codifying a correct “reading” of the past at the same time that it persists in the vexing task of explaining the present. Still, the contradictions and pitfalls inherent in such a policy are worth noting, for they tell us something important about the way judgments in art come to be institutionalized. They alert us to the fact that the history of modern art rests not on some immutable system of interpreting what artists have achieved but on particular acts of judgment made at particular times in particular circumstances.

Something else is also plainly legible in the design of the new MOMA. This is the important role played in the very conception of the building’s design by the change that has lately occurred in the size and character of the museum’s public. Which is to say that the new MOMA is a museum designed, as the old MOMA never was, to accommodate huge crowds of people—not all of whom, moreover, can be expected to have an informed interest in the art to be seen. The new museum is designed for a public nurtured on blockbuster exhibitions that are as much media events as they are art events.

It will be recalled that MOMA was itself responsible for mounting what remains in many ways the most spectacular of the recent blockbuster exhibitions. This was the great Picasso retrospective, numbering around 1000 works by the artist, which occupied the old MOMA building in its entirety during the spring and summer months of 1980, and filled it with capacity crowds (7000 visitors a day). This exhibition can now be seen to have been a watershed event in MOMA’s own history as a museum. It marked the end of the old MOMA and the beginning of the new. The galleries were emptied of every item in its collection that did not bear directly on this mammoth show. A new system of admission by advance reservation was devised, a new traffic pattern was designed for handling the crowds, and an augmented publicity department was created to insure that the crowds would keep coming.

It would not be quite correct, I think, to suggest that blockbuster exhibitions of this sort have converted the museums that embrace them into agencies of mass culture. But if the blockbuster exhibition did not transform the museum into a branch of mass culture, it nonetheless brought a fairly radical change in the museum-going public. It created, in effect, a new public which, while lacking both the knowledge and the sensibility to be found in the elite art public, must all the same be differentiated from the mass public that seeks its principal cultural gratifications in television and other commercial entertainment.

Nor would it be correct to characterize this new public as middlebrow. The middlebrow public of yesteryear, with its perfect confidence in its own philistine taste and its indifference, if not outright hostility, to avant-garde culture, has pretty much ceased to exist—a casualty, perhaps, of the death of the avant-garde

The American Review

itself and the absorption of so many of its characteristic attitudes by the institutions (the academy, the mass media, et al.) which once served as a kind of support system for middlebrow taste. In contrast to the old middlebrows, the new public I speak of is anything but confident of its taste. In a sense, this public may even be said to have no taste—but to be possessed instead of a keen appetite for whatever modes of cultural experience are persuasively and conspicuously commended to its attention.

This new phenomenon certainly makes itself felt in the very look and atmosphere of the new MOMA. We are made to feel it straightaway in the enormous lobby area and in the computerized checkroom, and then most conspicuously in the so-called Garden Hall, the vast atrium-like, glass-enclosed space that now rises on the north side of the museum to its topmost story and has the effect of reorienting the entire building away from the West 53rd Street entrance and toward the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden and the neighborhood of West 54th Street. This dazzling, light-filled space, with its elegant banks of escalators, its spacious halls, its busy display of structural detail and its dramatic views, is now the museum's main traffic artery. Interestingly, it is also the new MOMA's principal architectural signature—its identifying image.

It is therefore of some significance that it is a space remarkably inhospitable to the exhibition of works of art. There are works of art displayed there, of course, and some very important ones, too. Yet most of the art on display in the Garden Hall wages a losing battle against atrocious visual circumstance. Owing to the unremitting volume and intensity of the circumambient light, even sculptures as powerful as Gaston Lachaise's "Floating Figure" (1927) and Alberto Giacometti's "Large Head" (1960) are reduced to silhouettes; and because of the overwhelming scale of the Garden Hall, the paintings—though no doubt selected on the basis of size—tend to be sadly diminished.

The truth is, as a space in which to exhibit works of art, the Garden Hall is irredeemably makeshift, irrational and unrewarding. But the real purpose of this space is to provide a place where crowds can gather and take their ease without having to be in any way concerned with the works of art they have ostensibly come to the museum to look at. For that purpose the Garden Hall is suitably commodious and very entertaining. It is sheer spectacle and gives the visitor a lot to look at when he doesn't want to look at art.

Choosing a facade

Creating an architectural structure that would be perfectly consistent with MOMA's artistic purposes—a building that would reflect in all respects its special artistic mission while at the same time serving its practical needs—is a familiar problem for the museum. It has bedeviled MOMA for nearly 50 years—since 1936, in fact, when its founding director the late Alfred H. Barr Jr., and MOMA's trustees and benefactors set about the task of selecting an architect to design the museum's original building.

It was Alfred Barr's hope in 1936 to be able to engage the services of one of the great architects of the modern movement for this important commission. Since its opening in 1929, the museum had occupied temporary quarters in exist-

ing buildings. During this period the museum had made the cause of modern architecture one of its principal concerns—its historic survey, “Modern Architecture: International Exhibition,” was organized in 1932, the year the museum’s Department of Architecture was established—and it was therefore to be expected that when the time came for MOMA to put up a building of its own, the commission would go to one of the figures it had already singled out as modern masters. Barr’s own choices were three: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius and J.J.P. Oud, a Dutch architect associated with the avant-garde De Stijl group. Mies was clearly the director’s first choice, but Barr lost this battle. The ideal museum that he envisioned in 1936 was never built. The commission went instead to two Americans—Philip L. Goodwin and Edward Durrell Stone. Goodwin, though a MOMA trustee and a collector of modern painting and sculpture, was about as far from being a modernist as an architect could be in 1936. Stone was a young, undistinguished convert to modernism who happened to be in the employ of the architect of Rockefeller Center. Barr had warned that awarding the commission to Goodwin and Stone “will almost certainly result in a mediocre building,” but the trustees were adamant. Even the last-ditch effort made by Barr to keep up the appearance of architectural virtue by allowing Mies to design the facade of the Goodwin-Stone building came to nothing.

There are several things to be observed about this fateful episode, and all of them have a bearing on the architectural character of the new MOMA. One is that the trustees’ decision to settle for a “safe” solution in 1936 led to a fundamental split in MOMA’s architectural policies—a split that, from the ’30s down to the present day, has separated the ideas put forward in the museum’s architectural exhibition and publications program from those put into practice in the museum’s own building program. It is a split, moreover, that is now likely to remain permanent. But another thing to be observed about this decision is that it did not result in the predicted disaster. It may even have been responsible for averting one. We cannot know, of course, exactly what sort of building Mies would have designed for MOMA in the ’30s. What we do know is that the two most conspicuous museum facilities which Mies was given the opportunity to design in later years—the Brown Pavilion addition to the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston and the National Gallery in West Berlin—have proved, as spaces in which to exhibit works of art for public viewing, to be among the very worst on the international museum scene. So it was undoubtedly a lucky stroke for the museum that Alfred Barr lost his battle to have Mies design the original MOMA building in the ’30s.

With the new MOMA of 1984, alas, we have not been quite so lucky. For in the multi-storied, glass-enclosed Garden Hall which Cesar Pelli, the architect of the new MOMA, has now made its most conspicuous design feature, the museum has at long last achieved its (more or less) Miesian facade. And chances are that it is far grander than any that MOMA would have gotten in the ’30s. But is this the right style for the museum even today? There is certainly reason to doubt it. The fact that the Garden Hall is in many respects a very beautiful space—and just the kind of modern, light-filled space that Barr had no doubt envisioned for the museum in its original building—does not alter its almost total uselessness for showing works of art. Nor does the beauty of the Garden Hall alter the irony of

The American Review

its belatedness as architectural history.

It must be said that the task which confronted Cesar Pelli, the dean of the Yale School of Architecture, in designing the new MOMA was decidedly more complicated and unwieldy than any in the recent history of museum building. The new MOMA was never intended to be an entirely new building, and of course it isn't. Certain elements of the old Goodwin-Stone building as well as the addition of the garden wing designed by Philip Johnson in 1964 had somehow to be preserved and harmoniously integrated into the new museum, however much they might be modified in the resulting structure. At the same time, the museum's elegant, open-air sculpture garden—probably the most beloved open space of its kind in New York City—had likewise to be preserved and protected from the potentially overpowering contrast of the 52-story Museum Tower, the luxury apartment house that now rises above the west wing of the museum. And dominating all these considerations were two others: the all but absolute authority properly given to the museum's chief curators to control—and thus, in effect, to design—their own exhibition galleries; and the need to provide ample, nonviewing space for the museum's huge new public. Such an assignment could not have been expected to yield a completely coherent architectural structure; still less was it likely to inspire a great architectural idea. It is no wonder, then, that the new MOMA is not exactly an architectural masterpiece. The real wonder is that, given the circumstances and conditions to be met, it is as fine as it is, and that what is now the museum's primary function—to exhibit as extensively and as intelligently as possible the masterworks from its own permanent collections—is so beautifully served. One somehow doubts that a building which really was an architectural masterpiece would have served the museum as well.

The Louvre of modernism

"The Louvre," wrote Cézanne, "is the book in which we learn to read." For a great many artists, as for a great many art critics, scholars, collectors, curators and dealers, and for its ever expanding public, too, MOMA has long been the principal "book" in which we have learned to "read" the history of modern art. It has in this sense come closer than any other institution in the world to serving as the Louvre of modernism, and it is in this spirit that the installation of the permanent collections has been carried out in the new MOMA.

By and large, and despite some important flaws and failures, the execution of this formidable task has proved to be a triumph. At least this is the case for the installation of the European masters of painting and sculpture on the second floor of the museum, and for the departments devoted to drawings and to prints and illustrated books on the third floor. Far more problematical are the galleries largely but not exclusively devoted to American painting and sculpture on the third floor, and the new installation of the outdoor sculpture garden. As for the Department of Photography on the second floor and the Department of Architecture and Design on the fourth, these—like the Department of Film, which now presides over two movie theaters in the lower levels of the building—tend more than ever to address us as virtually separate museums, independent entities with standards, agendas and historical perspectives that differ in important res-

pects from those of other departments.

Of the many questions that have been raised about the museum's role and the future scope of its responsibilities, none is now more vexing than the problem of its relation to the contemporary art scene. On this question opinion seems to be divided—outside the museum, anyway. One view is that MOMA should get itself out of the business of putting on contemporary shows altogether. According to this view, the museum is now an institution very largely devoted to the art of a certain historical period, and it would be unwise as well as impractical for it to persist in the attempt to impose its authority in a sphere of artistic endeavor that lies outside its range. Another view, however, insists that direct and continuous involvement in judging, acquiring and exhibiting new art remains one of the most essential tasks of the museum, if not indeed *the* most essential. According to this view, it would represent a kind of spiritual death for the museum to withdraw from the contemporary scene and become a repository of modernist antiquities.

What complicates all attempts to come to terms with this question is the fact that MOMA, whether or not it persists in its effort to keep up with the contemporary scene, is henceforth going to devote its major energies and resources to exhibiting and documenting modernism's past achievements. This, after all, was the main component of the museum's mission from the beginning, and it remains a still larger part of its mission today. Even if its directors wished to do otherwise, they could not. The modernist classics are now big attractions while new and unknown artists are, by MOMA's standards, hardly attractions at all, and the museum needs the revenues that famous names and big historical subjects guarantee. It is in this sense, as well as others, that the museum is now hostage to the new public it has created for itself. Whatever else it may attempt to do, MOMA now seems locked, forever into concentrating primarily on the classics.

MOMA in the post-modern era

It has already been observed that from the founding of the museum more than half a century ago, MOMA undertook to define its interests in broad terms. At that time it was a very radical notion for the museum to give to architecture, industrial design, photography and film a kind of parity with painting, sculpture and the graphic arts, and it was from radical precedents—in Germany and Russia—that Alfred Barr derived his ideas about what a museum devoted to modern art should encompass. He had been to Germany and Russia in the '20s, and had been deeply impressed with the art—and with the ideas governing the art—which he studied there. These ideas were radical in more than an esthetic sense; they were radical in their social implications as well. At the Bauhaus in Germany and in the councils of the Russian avant-garde in the early years of the revolution, the very conception of what art was or should be was altered under the influence of a powerful utopian ideology. As a result, the boundary separating fine art from industrial art was, if not completely abandoned by everyone concerned, at least very much questioned and undermined. Henceforth, from this radical perspective, there were to be no esthetic hierarchies. A poster might be equal to a

The American Review

painting, a factory or a housing project as much to be esteemed as a great work of sculpture.

What governed the museum's outlook from its earliest days, then, was a vision that attempted to effect a kind of grand synthesis of modernist estheticism and the technology of industrialism. It therefore became part of the museum's esthetic mission to proselytize on behalf of modern architecture and modern design and also, paradoxically, to elevate photography and film to the realm of fine art. This was something genuinely new in the American art world and in the world of the American art museum.

As everyone can now see just by looking around at the visual and cultural environment in the West today, MOMA's mission in these matters proved in the end to be a great success. The esthetic that originated at the Bauhaus and other avant-garde groups has been stripped of its social ideology and turned into the reigning taste of the cultural marketplace. Modalities of design that were regarded as difficult or esoteric or impossibly "advanced" in the '30s are now the commonplaces of Western civilization. So popular have modern architecture and its accessories become in the last 40 years that there is now a widespread (post-modern) reaction against it. In the academy as well as in the media there is a virtual industry dedicated to extolling the esthetic attributes of film. The elevated artistic status of photography in recent years is too well known even to discuss. It would be absurd to claim that MOMA accomplished these important shifts in cultural life on its own, but the museum certainly played a key role in the history that set them in motion. In important ways, it created the role.

The question that inevitably looms in regard to this phenomenon half a century later, in a very different era, is this: does the museum—does any museum—any longer have an imperative function to perform that is not simply archival? Or is the museum's main mission, in regard to such activities, now limited precisely to preserving and codifying past achievement? Is MOMA to become simply an archive of the movement it has done so much to popularize and win acceptance for?

Certainly in regard to the museum's Department of Architecture and Design there is every sign that its principal tasks have been completed, and that it now has its attention firmly focused on the past. To the extent that the museum has played an active part in formulating ideas and shaping taste in the field of architecture in recent years, its role has been highly ambivalent. The two most important architectural events that MOMA has been responsible for in the last 20 years have actually been profoundly anti-modernist in substance and influence. The first was the publication, in 1966, of Robert Venturi's brilliant manifesto, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, which in many ways set the agenda for the post-modernist movement. The second was the dazzling exhibition devoted to Beaux-Arts architectural drawings in 1975. Together these events wrote *finis* to the modernist era in architecture and to MOMA's own contribution to that era.

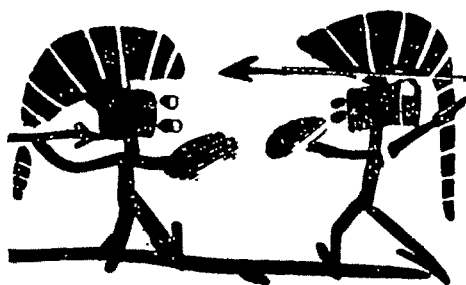
As for design at the new MOMA, it has been given the single most sensational installation in the entire museum, with a seven-meter-high space containing the great classics of modern poster design, a showcase of handsome industrial design products, a sleek Italian automobile from the '40s and—in the most audacious *coup de théâtre* anyone has ever attempted at MOMA—a helicopter sus-

MOMA: Touchstone of Taste

ponded over the escalator from the ceiling! In the inside galleries there are wonderful objects from the Art Nouveau era and then—well, we suddenly find ourselves in something that looks vaguely reminiscent of a department store's furniture display. It is very hard to believe at that point that such an installation has any real museological function.

MOMA as historical archive and MOMA as a living artistic force: to what extent can these roles, which in the course of recent decades have become distinctly separate from each other, be successfully combined? I have already observed that as far as painting and sculpture are concerned, the museum has no choice but to put its principal energies and resources into showing great names and important historical subjects. The same emphasis will very likely prevail in the Department of Architecture and Design, and it has always been the primary interest of the Department of Film and its loyal public. Almost the only departments of the museum which currently play a leadership role in judging and codifying new work are the Department of Photography and the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books.

The new MOMA remains, all the same, a great museum, and one that is still central to an understanding of the culture of this century. Yet with its expanded facilities and its glamorous new image, with its huge new public and its incomparable permanent collections, it is now a museum curiously devoid of intellectual leadership. Alfred Barr had set out to create a new kind of art museum in America—a museum that would bring together all the many disparate activities of the modern movement. It was in many ways a noble as well as a novel aspiration, yet in the museum he created he was obliged in the course of time to abandon some of the more doctrinaire aspects of his original program. As a result, even the old MOMA became a museum more devoted to high art than Barr had intended it to be. Today, it is only as an institution specializing in high art that the new MOMA can claim to have a great and necessary purpose. □



The Literary Journalists

By NORMAN SIMS

In recent years a new breed of American journalist has been using the tools of the novelist, without sacrificing accuracy, to delve into a variety of everyday subjects. Turning this movement "literary journalism," media scholar Norman Sims sees it as a refinement of the New Journalism of the 1960s. Through interviews with leading practitioners he identifies certain hallmarks of this literary approach to nonfiction—conscientious immersion in a particular milieu or profession, a distinctive, often personal narrative voice and an inventive way of structuring the story. An excerpt by literary journalist John McPhee follows this article. Sims, the editor of *The Literary Journalists*, a recent anthology from which this essay is excerpted, teaches journalism history and reporting at the University of Massachusetts.

FOR years, reporters have pursued their craft by sitting down near centers of power—the Pentagon, the White House, Wall Street. Like hounds by the dinner table, they have waited for scraps of information to fall from Washington, from New York and from their beats at the courthouse, city hall and the police station.

Today, scraps of information don't satisfy the reader's desire to learn about people doing things. Readers deal in their private lives with psychological explanations for events around them. They may live in complex social worlds, amid advanced technologies, where "the facts" only begin to explain what's happening. The everyday stories that bring us inside the lives of our neighbors used to be found in the realm of the fiction writer, while nonfiction reporters brought us the news from far-off centers of power that hardly touched our lives.

Literary journalists unite the two forms. Reporting on the lives of people at work, in love, going about the normal rounds of life, they confirm that the crucial moments of everyday life contain great drama and substance. Rather than hanging around the edges of powerful institutions, literary journalists attempt to penetrate the cultures that make institutions work.

Literary journalists follow their own set of rules. Unlike standard journalism, literary journalism demands immersion in complex, difficult subjects. The voice of the writer surfaces to show readers that an author is at work. Authority shows through. Whether the subject is a surgeon in the operating room or a computer design team in an aggressive corporation, the dramatic details yield only to persistent, competent, sympathetic reporters. Voice brings the authors into our world.

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Unlike fiction writers, literary journalists must be accurate. Characters in literary journalism need to be brought to life on paper, just as in fiction, but their feelings and dramatic moments contain a special power because we know the stories are true. The literary quality of these works comes from the collision of worlds, from a confrontation with the symbols of another, real culture.

Most readers are familiar with one brand of literary journalism, the "New Journalism," which began in the 1960s and lasted through the mid-1970s. Many of the New Journalists such as Tom Wolfe and Joan Didion have continued to produce extraordinary books. But literary journalists like George Orwell, Lillian Ross and Joseph Mitchell had been at work long before the New Journalists arrived. And now there has appeared a younger generation of writers who don't necessarily think of themselves as New Journalists, but do find immersion, voice, accuracy and symbolism to be the hallmarks of their work. Occasionally, readers discover this form of writing in *Esquire*, *The Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, *The Village Voice*, *New York*, some of the better regional publications such as *Texas Monthly*, and even in *The New York Review of Books*.

This form of writing has been called "literary journalism," and it seems to me a term preferable to the other candidates: personal journalism, the New Journalism and parajournalism. Some people in my trade—I'm a journalism professor—argue it is nothing more than a hybrid, combining the fiction-writer's techniques with facts gathered by a reporter. That may be. But the motion picture combines voice recording with the photograph, yet the hybrid still deserves a name.

While trying to define the novel, literary critic Ian Watt found that the early novelists couldn't provide help. They hadn't labeled their books "novels" and were not working in a tradition. Literary journalism has been around just long enough to acquire a set of rules. The writers know where the boundaries lie. The "rules" of harmony in music have been derived from what successful composers do. The same method can help explain what successful writers have done in creating the genre of literary journalism.

The New Journalists of the 1960s called attention to their own voices; they self-consciously returned character, motivation and voice to nonfiction writing. Standard reporters, and some fiction writers, were quick to criticize the New Journalism. It was not always accurate, they claimed. It was flashy, self-serving, and it violated the journalistic rules of objectivity. But the best of it has endured. Today's literary journalists clearly understand the difference between fact and falsehood, but they don't buy into the traditional distinctions between literature and journalism. "Some people have a very clinical notion of what journalism is," Tracy Kidder told me. "It's an antiseptic idea, the idea that you can't present a set of facts in an interesting way without tainting them. That's utter nonsense. That's the ultimate machinelike tendency." Kidder won both the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1982 for *The Soul of a New Machine*, a book that followed a design team as it created a new computer. He constructs narrative with a voice that allows complexity and contradiction. His literary tools—a powerful story line and a personal voice—draw readers into something perhaps more recognizable as a real world than the "facts only" variety of reporting.

Literary journalists bring themselves into their stories to greater or lesser

The American Review

degrees and confess to human failings and emotions. Through their eyes, we watch ordinary people in crucial contexts. Mark Kramer watched during many cancer operations, while other people's lives were in jeopardy on the operating table. Crucial contexts, indeed, and more so when Kramer discovered a spot one day and feared that it meant cancer for him. These authors understand and convey feeling and emotion, the inner dynamics of cultures. Like anthropologists and sociologists, literary reporters view cultural understanding as an end. But, unlike such academics, they are free to let dramatic action speak for itself. Bill Barich takes us to the horse races and brings alive the gambler's desire to control the seemingly magical forces of modern life; he aims to find the essences and mythologies of the track. By contrast, standard reporting presupposes less subtle cause and effect, built upon the events reported rather than on an understanding of everyday life. Whatever we name it, the form is indeed both literary and journalistic and it is more than the sum of its parts.

Two active generations of literary reporters are at work today. John McPhee, Tom Wolfe, Joan Didion and Richard Rhodes found their voices during the New Journalism era from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s. Wolfe's name summons visions of wild experimentation with language and punctuation. These pyrotechnics have diminished in his newer work. Through 20 years of steady production, Wolfe has proven the staying power of a literary approach to journalism.

These writers have influenced a younger generation of literary journalists, who include:

- Richard West, 44, who helped start *Texas Monthly*, and later wrote for *New York* and *Newsweek* magazines, remembers discovering, as a journalism student, the writing of Jimmy Breslin, Gay Talese and Tom Wolfe. "Those guys were just wonderful writers. Stunning. It opened your eyes to new vistas if you wanted to be a nonfiction writer," West said.

- Mark Kramer, 41, author of *Invasive Procedures*, said George Orwell's work introduced him to literary journalism, especially *Down and Out in Paris and London*, in which Orwell described his experiences as a tramp before World War II. The New Journalists were a more immediate role model for Kramer. "I read Tom Wolfe early," he said. "I'm second-generation New Journalist. I read McPhee when I was just coming up."

- Tracy Kidder, 39, admired Orwell, Liebling, Capote, Mailer, Rhodes, Wolfe and many others. But when asked if one writer stood above the others in influencing his development, Kidder quickly said, "McPhee has been my model. He's the most elegant of all the journalists writing today, I think."

- Mark Singer, 34, epitomizes the course of discovery traveled by the younger literary journalists. At Yale, he majored in English and simply read. "I think my models were journalists. I really studied journalists. I was very conscious of who was writing what. In the early 1970s journalists were starting to become stars. Only after I came to *The New Yorker* in 1974 did I get in touch with people like Liebling and John Bainbridge—he wrote *The Super Americans*, a brilliant book about Texas. He spent five years living in Texas. I went and read all of Bainbridge." Singer, who grew up in Oklahoma, was also influenced by Norman Mailer and *New Yorker* writers such as Lillian Ross, Calvin Trillin and Joseph Mitchell. "This stuff has been written in every era by certain writers," he said.

"People talk about Defoe or Henry Adams or whomever. Francis Parkman when he was writing *The Oregon Trail* was doing a kind of journalism as history. I think every era has those writers. I just happen to be shortsighted enough to focus upon my contemporaries."

• Sara Davidson, 42, learned the routines of standard reporting in the late 1960s at the Columbia School of Journalism and *The Boston Globe*. "When I first started writing for magazines, Lillian Ross was my model," she said. "I was going to do what Ross had done. She never used the word *I*, and yet it was so clear there was an orienting consciousness guiding you." Davidson discovered her stories needed the first person. The strong narrative voices of Joan Didion, Tom Wolfe and of Peter Matthiessen's *The Snow Leopard* have been her ideals.

Immersion • Literary journalists are the heretics of the profession. An elder of the tribe of Old Journalists once wrote to inform me, using an oddly mixed metaphor, that "McPhee is a journalistic spellbinder, that's all. . . . McPhee's journalistic warp and his literary woof make very thin cloth for any of us in the profession to use for patching our worn-out bromides." But the half dozen literary journalists I met before I interviewed McPhee were universally respectful.

McPhee is a private man, friendly but guarded. Entering his office at Princeton University in New Jersey, I examined the mementos which testify to his immersion in subjects such as geology, canoeing and the bears of New Jersey. On the wall he has a window-sized geologic map of the United States. He's pinned a piece of green nylon cord on the map from coast to coast. The cord cuts through the Appalachian Mountains, passes straight over the Plains and Rockies, then wavers in the mountains and valleys of Utah and Nevada where, McPhee said, the colored rock formations on the map "look like stretch marks." The green line clears the Sierra Nevada and ends at the Pacific Ocean. The nylon cord has followed the highway Interstate 80 from coast to coast; it is the ribbon of narrative that binds together McPhee's two recent books on the geology of North America. The books started out as a single article about the road cuts around New York City. Then a geologist told him that North American geology is best represented by an east-west line, and McPhee's thoughts turned toward Interstate 80. "I developed a vaulting ambition," he said. "Why not go to California? Why not look at *all* rocks?" Four years and two books later, he took a break from the subject, although he said it will take two more books to complete the journey.

"I discovered that you've got to understand a lot to write even a little bit. One thing leads to another. You've got to get into it in order to fit the pieces together," he said. That makes intuitive sense to most writers, but McPhee's 17 books, produced in 19 years, show an extraordinary staying power. He has fitted the pieces together to write about a designer of nuclear weapons, the history of the bark canoe, the technology of an experimental aircraft, environmental wars between Sierra Club Director David Brower and developers hungry for wilderness land, the intricacies of tennis and basketball, the isolated cultures of both the New Jersey Pine Barrens and Scotland's Inner Hebrides, conflicts among the residents of Alaska, and the geology of North America. Today, no other non-fiction writer approaches McPhee's range of subject matter.

The American Review

For McPhee, and for most other literary journalists, understanding begins with emotional connection, but quickly leads to immersion. In its simplest form, immersion means time spent on the job. McPhee drove 1800 kilometers of southern roads with a field zoologist before writing "Travels in Georgia." He journeyed several times cross-country on Interstate 80 with geologists for *Basin and Range* and *In Suspect Terrain*. Over a period of two years he made long journeys in Alaska, months at a time, in all seasons, collecting notes for *Coming Into the Country*.

Literary journalists gamble with their time. Their writerly impulses lead them toward immersion, toward trying to learn all there is about a subject. The risks are high. Not every young writer can stake two or three years on a writing project that might result in nothing. Bill Barich won his gamble. With five novels unpublished, he left home to live at a horse racetrack. His story of those weeks, *Laughing in the Hills*, won the attention of Robert Bingham and William Shawn, executive editor and editor of *The New Yorker*. Most literary journalists see immersion as a luxury that could not exist without the financial backing and editorial support of a magazine.

Mark Kramer gambled two years of his life writing *Three Farms: Making Milk, Meat and Money from the American Soil*. During those two years he received literary support from Richard Todd, the senior editor of *The Atlantic* who also saw Tracy Kidder through *Soul of a New Machine*, and survived on the slim finances of a small advance and a foundation grant. Again, the gamble paid off. The proceeds from *Three Farms* and another grant enabled him to write *Invasive Procedures*. He watched surgeons at work for nearly two years, until he was confident that he understood the operating-room routine, could tell good techniques from bad and could "translate the social byplay in the operating room."

"You have to stay around a long time before people will let you get to know them," Kramer said. "They're guarded the first time and second time and the first 10 times. Then you get boring. They forget you're there. Or else they've had a chance to make you into something in their world. They make you into a surgical resident or they make you into a farmhand or a member of the family. And you let it happen."

Every writer I talked with told similar stories. Their work begins with immersion in a private world; this form of writing might well be called "the journalism of everyday life."

Structure • "The piece of writing has a structure inside it," John McPhee said. "It begins, goes along somewhere, and ends in a manner that is thought out beforehand. I always know the last line of a story before I've written the first one. Going through all that creates the form and the shape of the thing. It also relieves the writer, once you know the structure, to concentrate each day on one thing. You know right where it fits."

Structure, in a longer piece of nonfiction writing, has more work to do than merely to organize, according to McPhee. "Structure," he said, "is the juxtaposition of parts, the way in which two parts of a piece of writing, merely by lying side-by-side, can comment on each other without a word spoken. The way in

which the thing is assembled, you can get much said, which can be lying there in the structure of the piece rather than being spelled out by a writer."

Chronological structure dominates most journalism, as McPhee learned when he worked at *Time* magazine. But chronological reporting does not always serve the writer best. McPhee restructured time in "Travel in Georgia" and in the first part of *Coming Into the Country*. Sometimes, chronology may give way to thematic structure. In *A Roomful of Hovings*, a profile of Thomas Hoving, former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, McPhee faced a peculiar problem. Hoving's life contained a series of themes: his scattered experiences learning to recognize art fakes, his work as parks commissioner in New York, his undistinguished early career as a student, his lifelong relationship with his father and so on. McPhee told one tale at a time, one story following another in a structure McPhee compares to a capital "Y." The descending branches finally joined at a moment of epiphany during Hoving's college career at Princeton, and then proceeded along the bottom stem in a single line. McPhee maintained time sequences within each episode, but the themes were arranged to set up their dramatic juxtaposition.

McPhee handed me a xeroxed quotation. "Read this," he said. The passage quoted Albert Einstein, on the music of Schubert: "But in his larger works I am disturbed by a lack of architectonics." The term *architectonics* refers to structural design that gives order, balance and unity, the elements that relate the parts to each other and to the whole.

I had previously heard the term *architectonics* from Richard Rhodes, who had said, "The kind of architectonic structures that you have to build, that nobody ever teaches or talks about, are crucial to writing and have little to do with verbal abilities. They have to do with pattern ability and administrative ability—generalship, if you will. Writers don't talk about it much, unfortunately."

Accuracy • In a society in which schoolchildren learn that there are two kinds of writing, fiction and nonfiction, and that the nonfiction is on the whole pretty flat prose, doing literary journalism is tricky business. We naturally assume that what reads like fiction must be fiction.

Yet a mandate for accuracy pervades literary journalism, according to its practitioners. McPhee, who finds an avuncular role uncomfortable, nevertheless has the right to make a few suggestions for those who find a model in his work. "Nobody's making rules that cover everybody," he said. "The nonfiction writer is communicating with the reader about real people in real places. So if those people talk, you say what those people said. You don't say what the writer decides they said. I get prickly if someone suggests there's dialogue in my pieces that I didn't get from the source. You don't make up dialogue. You don't make a composite character. Where I came from, a composite character was a fiction. So when somebody makes a nonfiction character out of three people who are real, that is a fictional character in my opinion. And you don't get inside their heads and think for them. You can't interview the dead. You could make a list of the things you don't do. Where writers abridge that, they hitchhike on the credibility of writers who don't.

"And they blur something that ought to be distinct. It's one thing to say non-

The American Review

fiction has been rising as an art. If that's what they mean by the line blurring between fiction and nonfiction, then I'd prefer another image. What I see in that image is that we don't know where fiction stops and fact begins. That violates a contract with the reader."

Accuracy can also insure the authority of the writer's voice, Kramer explained. "I'm constantly trying to accumulate authority in my writing, intersecting the reader's experience and judgment. I want to be able to make an observation and be trusted, so I have to show that I'm a good observer, that I'm savvy. I can do a lot of that with language, with sureness and informality. You can also blow your authority very quickly. One of the big motivations for getting all the details right—why I had farmers read my farm book in manuscript, and surgeons read the surgeons' manuscript—is I don't want to lose authority. I don't want to get a single detail wrong."

Voice • The New Journalists of the 1960s and their critics never reached agreement on the use of the self in journalism. Sometime New Journalists turned the spotlight on themselves in apparent violation of all the rules of objective reporting.

Much of the controversy over the self in journalism has been explicated by journalism professor David Eason, whose studies of New Journalism defined two groups. In the first camp, New Journalists were like ethnographers who provided an account of "what it is that's going on here." Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese and Truman Capote, among others, removed themselves from their writing and concentrated on their subjects' realities.

The second group included writers such as Joan Didion, Norman Mailer, Hunter S. Thompson and John Gregory Dunne. They saw life through their own filters, describing what it felt like to live in a world where shared public understandings about "the real world" and about culture and morals had fallen away. Without an external frame of reference, they focused more on their own reality. The authors in this second group were often a dominating presence in their works.

Either way, critics had a field day. Novelist Herbert Gold ripped holes in the personal journalism of Norman Mailer and others like him, calling it "epidemic first personism" in a 1971 article. Meanwhile, Tom Wolfe, who offered readers a mannered voice but never stood on center stage as Mailer did, suffered the reverse. Critic and novelist Wilfrid Sheed said the distortion produced by Wolfe's interpretations was the source of our enjoyment. He should quit pretending to evoke a subject "as it really is," Sheed said. New Journalists, it seemed, either had too much of themselves in their writing, or not enough.

The younger literary journalists have calmed down. As I spoke with these younger writers, they seemed concerned with finding the right voice to express their material. "Every story contains inside it one, maybe two, right ways of telling it," Tracy Kidder said. "Your job as a journalist is to discover that." Literary journalists are no longer worried about "self," but they do care about tactics for effective telling, which may require the varying presence of an "I" from piece to piece.

The introduction of personal voice, according to Mark Kramer, allows the

writer to play one world off against another, to toy with irony. "The writer can posture, say things not meant, imply things not said. When I find the right voice for a piece, it admits play, and that's a relief, an antidote to being pushed around by your own words," Kramer said. "Voice that admits 'self' can be a great gift to readers. It allows warmth, concern, compassion, flattery, shared imperfection—all the real stuff that, when it's missing, makes writing brittle and larger than life."

Daily reporters subsume voice more often than they call attention to it, creating what Kramer calls an "institutional" voice. As I tell reporting students, whenever a newspaper writer makes a judgment or expresses an opinion, readers assume the newspaper itself has taken a stand. Without the newspaper standing behind them, literary journalists must discover how they belong in the story as private selves. Frequently, the writer's decision to use a personal voice grows from a feeling that publicly shared manners and morals can no longer be taken for granted.

"Once you don't have a common moral community for an audience," Kramer said, "if you want to go on talking about what's interesting, then it's useful to introduce the narrator. Even if there are a lot of different readers, they can all say, 'Oh, yeah, I know what sort of guy this is: a Jewish, New York intellectual, left-liberal.' If the writer says who he is, and how he thinks about something, the reader knows a lot."

Personal voice can discomfit writers as well as readers, but that may be the point. The institutional voice of newspapers can carry nonfiction writing only so far. Beyond that, the reader needs a guide. Sara Davidson said her transition from *The Boston Globe* to literary journalism wasn't easy. "Anyone who has come up from a newspaper has a great deal of self-consciousness about even writing the word *I*. I don't remember when I first used it, but it was just in one little paragraph, a trial balloon. The more I did it the easier it got and also I found I could do more with it. It enabled me to impose the storyteller on the material."

Responsibility • A writer's voice grows from experience. Sara Davidson's voice developed while she kept a journal of her life. There are hazards in using the personal voice, however, some of which she explained to me.

Davidson learned about responsibility after she wrote *Loose Change*, the story of three women's lives during the tumultuous years in the 1960s when America suffered through a social revolution. She was one of the three women in the book. In college at the University of California, Berkeley, they had lived in the same house. Later, they went their own ways, Davidson to New York and a journalism career, another to the radical political world of Berkeley and the third to the big-money art world. In the early 1970s, Davidson interviewed her former roommates and reconstructed their experiences for *Loose Change*. When she wrote it in the mid-1970s, two movements converged. First, she had learned that people responded best when her writing was personal, and she filled the book with intimate details. Second, a confessional strain in the women's movement peaked at that time; many women were writing in the most direct terms about deep fears and personal relations.

"I think Freud said once that you owe yourself a certain discretion," David-

The American Review

son told me. "You just don't go blabbing everything about yourself publicly. But that was not where the women were going. There was no discretion being practiced. Everything was permissible and I was caught up in the ideas."

She showed drafts of the book to the two other women involved and to her husband. They participated in the revisions. But when the book was published, responsibility for these personal intimacies became the issue. Davidson had changed the names of many characters and the two women, but friends recognized them instantly. "Suddenly, something that was all right as a manuscript was not all right when it was being read widely and people were responding to it," Davidson said. "There's one scene where I had a fight with my husband and he slapped me. Well, he started getting crank calls from people who accused him of being a wife beater. It's true, he did slap me. But suddenly he was being vilified, publicly. There were people who read it and thought he was a monster."

After *Loose Change* was published, Davidson decided she would never write so intimately about her life again. Had she anticipated the results, Davidson said, she would have written a novel instead. "I would have written the exact same book. I would have said it was fiction. People say knowing it was about real people heightened their appreciation and relationship to it. They preferred that it was nonfiction. But I do know I would never, never write again so intimately about my life because I can't separate my life from the people who have been in it." This conflict seems inherent in a form of writing where practitioners form friendships with their subjects.

Other writers told me they use the role of the professional journalist to some advantage, but they have never written anything so intimate as *Loose Change*. McPhee said he takes the stance of the reporter with an open notebook. The people he interviews know he is writing for *The New Yorker*; they are responsible for their revelations.

"Obviously, if you take a project, your assumption is you don't owe them anything," Davidson said. "Everything is for the record. Anything you observe is fair game. And that's how I've practiced it. All the women in *Loose Change* signed releases. They made it legal to give me this material. Emotionally and morally it's not always so clear cut."

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After several months spent interviewing writers, dragging around my list of characteristics and concerns of literary journalism, I felt the entries sounded mechanical. Just immerse yourself in a subject, find a good structure, maybe use some of Tom Wolfe's techniques for documenting "status life" and writing scenes, and then what? Will that be literary journalism?

I came to doubt that anything was so certain. Ultimately, everyone I spoke with circled around a difficult topic. Writers talk easily about techniques, but like all of us, they find it hard to explain their motivations. Sometimes we would get close enough for me to sense the artist behind the page. Sara Davidson was talking about creating strong narratives, where from the first paragraph the reader buys the ticket and has to take the trip. She stopped to consider for a moment, and said, "I'm not even sure how this is done. There are certain tricks but I don't think it's a matter of tricks. I think it has a lot to do with sensibility. I asked the

novelist Philip Roth once if he thought he could create more sense of intimacy by using the first person. He said he thought it was the urgency and intensity with which he grabbed hold of the material, grasped it, and was able to pull the reader into his world. I think it has something to do with the author's sensibility."

Tracy Kidder found other terms to talk about the same thing. "I think of it in terms of resonance," Kidder said. "The conception of *Soul of a New Machine* was to convey something of the whole by looking at one of its parts, to let this team of computer designers stand for other teams. Usually the best works of literature have a close attachment to the particular. You pluck a guitar string and another one vibrates."

Like Kidder, John McPhee wanted to avoid placing his work in categories. It would be unfair, of course, to tie up any writer's work that way. McPhee suggested such characterizations are the task of academics, but then he revealed one such secret about his own writing.

"There really are lots of ideas going by," McPhee said. "A huge stream of ideas. What makes somebody choose one over another? If you make a list of all the work I've ever done, and put a little mark beside things that relate to activities and interests I had before I was 20, you'd have a little mark beside well over 90 percent of the pieces of writing. That is no accident.

"Paul Fussell said he wrote about the First World War in *The Great War and Modern Memory* as a way of expressing himself about his own experiences in World War II. That makes *complete* sense. Why did I write about tennis players? Why did I write about a basketball player? Why hold this person up for scrutiny and not that one? Because you've got some personal interest that relates to your own life. It's an important theme about anybody's writing." □



An Excerpt from "Game Warden"

By JOHN MCPHEE

John McPhee, the dean of American literary journalists, has recently written about a flying game warden, also named John McPhee, who patrols a vast stretch of wilderness in the state of Maine. This vignette is excerpted from an article in *The New Yorker*.

SEVERAL seasons later, I went down the Allagash River in October in a party of four. They were days of intermittent snowstorms—fast-moving squalls that would come blowing through, tearing up the water, obscuring the air. Time after time, as one of those storms was departing we would hear a drone from beyond the trees. An airplane would emerge from the receding clouds, a blue-and-white floatplane with a pair of canoe paddles wedged in its pontoon cross braces. After leaning over for a look, he would vanish with a waggle of the wings.

Since then, I have come to know him well, and in various seasons have spent some days with him in the air—with the state's permission, going along on his patrols. Thus, with me sitting behind him, we have been paired—one name, two people—150 meters in the air, scanning the country from Moosehead Lake to Estcourt Station, the north extreme of Maine. He calls me John; I call him Jack, as people do more often than not. Flying half the year with floats, the other half with skis, he has spent so much time in the air above the woods that—despite the exercise he gets snowshoeing, skiing, paddling, and splitting wood—he has “turn-pike back,” from (as he puts it) “sitting all day with my knees in my mouth.” His home, which is also his flying base, is in Plaisted, on Eagle Lake, a few kilometers south of Fort Kent. To fly from the base to the most distant corner of his district takes an hour and 15 minutes. The entire flight is over forest and never crosses a paved or public road. Looking down, he picks through the trees with his eyes. In concentration, he has learned to ignore the interference of canopies assembling in his mind glimpses of whatever may lie below. He could spot a tent in a tropical rain forest. To hide from his surveillance seems impossible in Maine. (“You can tell about people by the way they camp. If they go to a lot of trouble to be out of the way, they’re Sneaky Petes. They have something to hide.”) In his district are 17 ground wardens, their names reflective of the region where they live: Gary Pelletier, John Caron, Rodney Sirois, Phil Dumond. For them, Jack is another pair of eyes with long perspective.

“Two Two Five Two. Two Two Six Seven. I’m over the St. John near the Big Black Rapid, eastbound. Is there anything we can do for you while we’re here?”

The voices of wardens come up from the woods. A hunter near Seven Islands

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An Excerpt from "Game Warden"

has lost his bearings, has no idea where he set up his camp. Jack has a look and finds the camp. A party at Nine Mile is missing one hunter. Jack hunts the hunter and finds him walking in a brook.

"We've been in the air five hours," he said one afternoon. "This is when you've really got to buckle down if you want to do this work. After five hours, your eyes might begin to skim the tops of the trees. You've got to look between the trees and see what's on the ground, or you'll miss something. I think that is why I'm sort of addicted to coffee. It helps me in the afternoon."

In winter, as he cants the airplane and studies the sign in snow, he is careful to breathe in the middle of the cabin—or the Plexiglas fogs up, the vapor freezes, and the rime obscures his view. When he lands and goes off on some mission on skis or snowshoes, he first gets out three blankets and drapes them over the engine, as if he were wrapping a horse. He tucks them up snugly, and crosses one blanket over the air intake like a scarf protecting a skater's mouth. In warm weather, he drops into tiny ponds, landing in space that a loon could not get out of, space that would make a duck think twice. Some of these ponds are in the high intervalles of small connected mountains and are extremely remote. Jack keeps canoes up there, hidden in the brush. In this place and that, for purposes both professional and private, he has 13 canoes. "I'm addicted to the backcountry," he remarked one day on the edge of an isolated pond. "I definitely am just an outdoors person." After stashing a canoe, he gave the plane a shove toward the center of the pond, leaped after it, landed on the end of the pontoon, and walked on it like a river driver walking on a log. Swinging into the cockpit, he made a downwind takeoff within 100 meters. On the ground as well as in the air, he does indeed seem most in his element when he is out in the big woods, where he spends nearly all his working time and a good bit of whatever remains—"out in the williwags," as he refers to the backcountry. A williwag, apparently, is a place so remote that it can be reached only by first going through a boondock.

In certain lakes and ponds—McKeen Lake, Fourth Pelletier Pond—there were large dark patches, roseate bruises in the water. He said they were "boiling" springs. Trout hung around them in crowds. And the springs were not discernible except from the air. Deer in the woods looked like Dobermans, and he would be counting 10, 11, 12 before I could separate even one from its background. Cow moose, up to their knees in water, stood motionless, like equestrian statues with missing riders. Bears were everywhere—bears in the understory, bears on the gravel bars of the St. John River, bears on the timber companies' tote roads, bears on the lawns of Jack's neighbors near the base. Flying into the sun above one shallow lake, we followed a plume of mud that something had stirred up in the water. In the caroming glare, we could not see anything at the head of the plume. "Watch," he said through the intercom. "Watch as the light flips over." We passed the plumehead and glanced back. A bull moose was walking through the water, trailing mud. There were blue herons in white pines, male mergansers in the Currier Ponds, a beaver busy in a pond of his own. "There's a beaver working. He's going to splash." With a mighty slap on the water, the beaver disappeared. Jack knew the pH of the Hudson Ponds, and the geology that had caused the high number. The geology was very evident, sticking up in the air.

The American Review

"That's a nice little chunk of rock," he said, swinging past it on a day when the woods were brushed with mist.

"We call these scuddy conditions," he went on. "Like that over there where the cloud is on the ridge. Flying it is called scud running—right on the deck. When some people talk about scud running, they mean 300-meter ceilings. When I talk about it, I mean 15-meter ceilings. That's what we often have here." All over the undulating forest, clouds lay on the ridges, and we flew in the valleys of rivers, streams, and brooks. A cold rain was falling. The outside air temperature was 5.5 degrees Celsius. "This is a condition for carburetor icing," he commented. "Sometimes the old carburetor looks just like you were handcranking ice cream."

On the radio we heard Jimmy Dumond, a ground warden, calling the state-police barracks in Houlton. Off in the woods by one of the logging roads he had found a small car with the license plate Y WORK. He asked the police to tell him whose it was—names and addresses being useful clues to what may be happening in the woods. The car belonged to Fred Callahan, of Auburn Maine, and his apparent purpose was unspecific recreation. Dumond, somewhere near the outlet of First Musquacook Lake, then called Two Two Five Two, asking for reconnaissance of a nearby ridge.

"I'll have a look if I can stay under the scud," Jack replied, and we went up the ridge with the pontoons close to the trees. Over the intercom he said to me, "In these same conditions, if the temperature drops, the visibility is considerably less."

"Why is that?"

"Because the air is full of snowflakes."

He remarked that in scuddy conditions he always feels comfortable if he can see ahead, because he knows every valley and where it will lead—he knows "the way the land lays," he even knows "most of the trees"—but in snow he cannot see ahead. He said it was important to know the country three ways. To the unaccustomed eye, severe clarity could be just as misleading as low scud; and then, of course, there were certain emergencies requiring that he fly at night. At night, he said, he flies "like the oldtimers, on instruments"—the instruments being his compass, his wristwatch, and the altimeter. Sometimes he flies that way in daytime. "I do it quite often," he said. "It's not recommended policy, but sometimes it's the best way to get around. It's actually safer than being right down on the trees and catching a wing on a dead branch you don't see—which is the sort of thing that has happened to an awful lot of bush pilots."

He also said that he had no desire whatever to tickle the dragon's tail—his expression for flying in extremely marginal conditions. He never wants to tickle the dragon unless he feels he has to. On a day of heavy gusts, when he could lose control of the plane on takeoff or landing, he does not fly unless something happens that makes a flight compelling ("unless there's an emergency, or I'm out here when the gusts come up").

One afternoon, I noticed that both fuel gauges, which were above his head and somewhat behind him on either side of the cabin, were registering empty. Trying my best to sound unconcerned, I said slowly, "How's the fuel supply? Have you got a lot of fuel?"

An Excerpt from "Game Warden"

He did not need eyes in the back of his head to see me noticing the gauges or to read the anxiety in my face. He said he would never trust either one of those gauges—especially if they said the tanks were full. On the back of his hand he had written in ink the number 15.2—the last digits on the tachometer's engine-hour meter when we took off from the base. The meter now said 18.4. He had put 5.5 hours of fuel in the airplane before we left, and we had used 3.2. Also on his hand were three small hash marks, one for each elapsed hour. He was drawing on the wing tanks an hour at a time. □



Economic Reasoning and Ethics

By THOMAS C. SCHELLING

Much economic theory rests on an assumption that, in making choices, individuals behave rationally, in accordance with their own aims and the incentives and disincentives that exist around them. This assumption is accepted to varying degrees within the economic profession, and it leads to some insights about human behavior and to a distinctive mode of reasoning about public policy issues. Thomas C. Schelling, professor of political economy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, has lent his economist's perspective to interdisciplinary studies on issues from biotechnology to foreign aid. In the following essay, drawn from his most recent book, *Choice and Consequence*, Schelling illustrates how the ethical questions of public policy can often be clarified through economic reasoning.

POLICY judgments are easier to come by the farther we are from our goals. If there are only two directions and we know which is forward, and there are limits to how fast we can go, no fine discrimination is needed. If aid to the poor is far too little, highway traffic far too fast, building codes far too lax, teachers' salaries far too low, or the rights of defendants far too little observed, we know what we need to get moving. We can worry about how much is enough when we get close, if we ever do. Meanwhile we can push on.

Knowing what to do is also easy if our capabilities are growing and our horizons receding, and yesterday's goals will be outgrown tomorrow. Like a family on a rising income, we needn't worry about overshooting: if we buy too big a house today, we'll be able to afford it tomorrow.

I have often been glad that I wasn't in charge. It is easy enough to see plainly that there is too much inequality (or illiteracy, or ill health, or injustice) and to help to reduce it, knowing that despite all efforts too much will remain. But if it were up to me to decide *how much* inequality is not too much, or how much injustice, or how much disregard for the elderly or for future generation, I'd need more than a sense of direction.

Discomfort also arises when, intent on speeding toward an ever receding goal, we find that the goal suddenly stops receding and we threaten to overshoot. There appears to be a widespread belief that overshoot is what we've done.

Worse, there is retrospective disenchantment with the mood that motivated

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the effort and set the social-policy goals in the first place. There is chagrin at having been too enthusiastic about what could be accomplished. There is disaffection toward those whose demands are insatiable and whose gratitude is inconspicuous. Whatever the reason, there is a reexamination of policy—especially policy that reflects social obligation—and there is retrenchment in the air. Commitments are being reassessed; “tradeoffs” discussed and costs weighed anew against benefits.

These are not “hard times” in the old sense. In America life is still good and getting better for most people: it is the problems, not the times, that are hard. And among the hard issues are some ethical ones. They may not be the hardest or the most important, but they are important and they are hard.

I have been asked how economic reasoning can help, or how it misleads, in facing, solving or avoiding the ethical components of policy. Does economic reasoning itself represent a particular ethic; or, if not the reasoning, the people who use it?

The Ethics of Policy

What I mean by the ethics of policy is the relevant ethics when we try to think disinterestedly about rent control, minimum wages, subsidized medical care for the poor, safety regulations, cigarette taxes or the financing of Social Security.

Farmers have an interest in price supports, laundry operators in minimum-wage laws, doctors in the financing of medical care, and electric utilities in clean-air regulation. I want to define the ethics of policy as what we try to bring to bear on those issue in which we do not have a personal stake.

It is hard to find issues that are absolutely unsoiled with personal interest. Still, most of us want to think and to talk on many issues as though we are not interested parties. We want to discuss welfare and national defense and school construction and unemployment benefits as though we were not personally involved. There will be an unmistakable element of social obligation; nobody can discuss income-tax rates or welfare levels without a participatory awareness that the poor, the unfortunate, the disadvantaged and the otherwise deserving have some legitimate claim on those who can afford to help. But although few issues are without financial impact somewhere, and most big issues involve big amounts of money, we can often confine our personal stake to an aggregate and non-specific social obligation.

The Ethics of Pricing

My students always like gasoline rationing. They believe in it on ethical principles. Evidently the principles lie deeper than rationing itself; the students have some notion of what happens with rationing and without it, or with some specific alternative, and they have a preference about the outcome. Students know that there are gainers and losers; their ethics appear to relate to who gains, who loses and how much.

I can talk most of them out of it. I warn them in advance that I am going to show them that if they like rationing there is something they should like better. I

The American Review

join them in believing the free market needn't be let alone, but I do propose what is sometimes called "rationing by the purse." I suggest we let the price of gasoline rise until there is no shortage, and capture the price increase with a tax. Because that looks hard on the poor, my students do not like it.

The first step in subverting their ethical preference is to propose that under any system of rationing that they might devise—and it is not easy to design a "fair" system of rations—people should be encouraged to buy and sell ration coupons. This proposal has little appeal. The rich will obviously burn more than their share of gas, the poor being coerced by their very poverty into releasing coupons for the money they so desperately need. But eventually students recognize that the poor, because they are poor, would like the privilege of turning their coupons into money. Where gas coupons can only provide them gas at a discount, transferable coupons can buy milk at a discount. If it is unfair that the poor cannot drive as much as the rich, it is the poverty that is unfair, not the gasoline system.

The principle established, we observe that coupons are worth cash, whether you buy them, sell them or merely turn in your own at the local service station. If gas at the pump is 35 cents a liter and coupons sell for 20 cents, the net price of gasoline is 55 cents; anyone who gets 30 litres worth of coupons is getting a clumsy equivalent of \$6.00 cash. The station that sells 30 liters receives \$10.50 in money and \$6.00 in coupons that could have been traded for cash. What we have is a 20-cent tax payable at the pump in special money, and a cash disbursement to motorists paid in this special money. We could just as well do it all without the coupons.

There is more to it than that, but the "more" usually does not involve much ethics. It isn't that we resolved an ethical issue. We merely lifted the veil of money and discovered that the ethical issue we thought was there was not. Or, perhaps better, the ethical issue that we associated with rationing was tangential to that procedure. Whatever the compensatory principle is that appeals to the students' sense of fairness, there are many procedures that can achieve it, some better than others, rationing neither worst nor best; and once it is all converted to money, it is easier to see what some of the alternatives are and whether they are ethically superior. The claim for economics is modest: it often helps diagnose misplaced identification of an ethical issue. And it does this solely by helping to identify what is happening. It is not clarifying ethics: it is only clarifying economics.

The Clash Between Equity and Incentives

Policy issues are preponderantly concerned with helping, in compensatory fashion, the unfortunate and the disadvantaged. We have welfare for those who cannot work, unemployment benefits for people out of jobs, disability benefits for the disabled, hospital care for the injured and the ill, disaster relief for the victims of floods, income-tax relief for the victims of accidental loss, and rescue services for people who find themselves in danger.

An unsympathetic way to restate this idea is that a preponderance of government policies have the purpose of rewarding people who get into difficulty. There

is no getting away from it. Almost any compensatory program directed toward a condition over which people have any kind of control, even remote and probabilistic control, reduces the incentive to stay out of that condition and detracts from the urgency of getting out of it.

To keep the issue in perspective we can observe that private insurance can have the same adverse influence on behavior. People more willingly drive on slippery roads the more nearly complete their auto-insurance coverage; back doors are unlocked if the homeowner's policy is liberal in its provisions for burglary; I am more indulgent of my sore throat if my employer provides an ample quota of sick days.

There is no use denying it in defense of social programs. As is usually the case with important issues, principles conflict. On the one hand, we want to treat unemployment as a collective liability, sustaining the family at public expense when working members lose their livelihoods. And on the other, we want not to induce people to get conveniently disemployed or to feel no need when unemployed to seek work vigorously. What helps toward one objective hurts toward the other. Offering 90 percent of normal pay can make unemployment irresistible for some, and even provide a net profit for those who can moonlight or work around the home. Providing only 40 percent over a protracted period makes living harsher than we want it to be. There is nothing to do but compromise. But a compromise that makes unemployment a grave hardship for some makes it a pleasant respite for others, and we cannot even be comfortable with the compromise.

I do not know whether one of the principles, helping the disadvantaged, should be considered ethical and the other, not letting them get away with it, not ethical. Much of the discussion about welfare rights, about not proportioning medical care to the ability to pay, and about not producing a "work ethic" by threatening the unemployed with their families' starvation, is in an ethical mode. To a lesser extent, ethical considerations are evoked over the encouragement of malingering, rewarding those who beat the system, or inducing dependence on the state. Once it is recognized, however, that two principles conflict, that two desiderata point in opposite directions and neither is so overwhelming that the other can be ignored, that both objectives have merit, and even that there is no ideal compromise because there is a diversified population at risk, the ethical contents of the principles begin to seem tangential to the inescapable problem of locating an acceptable compromise.

It is a universal problem. It won't go away. It can't be neglected. It isn't even unique to *public* policy. The word "compromise" has those two different meanings. Compromising a principle sounds wrong. Compromising *between* principles is all right.

Valuing the Priceless

Among the poignant issues that policy has to face, explicitly or by default, are some that seem to pit finite cost against infinite value. What is it worth to save a life? How much to spend on fair trial to protect the innocent against false verdicts? What limits to put on the measures, some costly in money and some in anguish, to extend the lives of people who will die soon anyway or whose lives,

The American Review

in someone's judgment, are not worth preserving?

These issues are ubiquitous. They arise in designing a national health program. They are directly involved in decisions for traffic lights, airport safety, medical research, fire and Coast Guard protection and the safety of government employees. They are implicitly involved in regulation for occupational safety or safe water supplies, in building codes and speed laws, even helmets for motorcyclists—because somebody has to pay the costs.

It is characteristic of policy makers, especially at the Federal level, that they usually think of themselves as making decisions that affect others, not themselves. Hurricane and tornado warnings are for those living where hurricanes and tornados strike; mine safety is a responsibility of legislators and officials above-ground concerning the lives of people who work underground. Policies toward the senile, the comatose, the paralyzed and the terminally ill are deliberated by people who are none of the above.

The situation is different when a small community considers a mobile cardiac unit or a new fire engine. The question then is not what we ought to spend to save someone else's life but what we can afford to make *our* lives safer. Spending or stinting on the lives of others invites moral contemplation; budgeting my expenditures for my own benefit, alone or with neighbors for the school safety program, is less a moral judgment than a consumer choice, a weighing of some reduction in risk against the other things that money will buy.

There is a suggestion here. Maybe we can reduce the unmanageable moral content of that paternalistic decision at the national level by making it more genuinely vicarious. Instead of asking what society's obligation to *them* is, we should ask how *they* would want *us* to spend *their* money. In deciding how much to require people to spend on their own seat belts, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and lightning rods, it is easier to be vicarious and it is legitimate to get our bearings by reflecting on how much we might reasonably spend on our own safety. The question still may not be easy, but it is less morally intimidating.

Surely, if we were all similarly at risk and in like economic circumstances, this would be the way to look at it, whether for the town bandstand or the town ambulance. On a national scale it is less transparently so, but nevertheless so, that we should want our appropriations committees to think of themselves as spending our money in our behalf. We want them neither to skimp where it really counts nor to go overboard to prepare at great expense—our expense—for the remotest of dangers. We want them to be thinking not about what concern the government owes its citizens for their safety but how much of our own money we taxpayers want spent for our safety.

With that perspective it is remarkable how quickly the issue drops the ethical content that was only a construct of the initial formulation. We can still find ethical issues, but not the one that seemed so central.

We could call this the contractual approach to social obligation. In the absence of an understanding, I may owe you, in your extremity, unbounded attention and concern, comfort and livelihood, room and board, and the best medical attention in perpetuity, and feel guilty when I stop to wonder whether you are worth the burden you are putting on me. When it is my turn, of course I'll expect the same from you (or from whoever has the corresponding responsibility to-

ward me that I had toward you), feeling a little guilty perhaps but not enough to relinquish my claim. But if we could sit down together at an early age in good health and legislate our relation to each other, specifying the entitlements we wished to obtain between us, recognizing equal likelihood of being beneficiaries or benefactors, we could elect to eschew exorbitant claims. And it would not strike us as an ethical issue.

The contractual approach can help with some of those other tantalizing dilemmas, like which planeload of passengers to save, the big plane with lots of passengers or the one with mostly empty seats, if both are at risk and one at most can be saved. What I should do in the control tower if that godlike decision were mine is an ethical dilemma that for some thoughtful people has no easy answer. But if I am an airline passenger answering a questionnaire on what rule I want the control tower to follow in emergencies, the issue is neither ethical nor a dilemma.

I cheated a little in supposing that we were all similarly situated with respect to some risk and alike in our ability to afford protective measures. We usually are not. But the value of this conceptual approach of considering what the safety is worth to the people who are safer, may still be salvaged. If you are more at risk than I—let's say you are at risk and I am not at all—and the rule is that we share the cost of reducing the risk and we are purely self-regarding, I shall find the measures worth nothing, while you find the measures twice as attractive as if you had to pay it all yourself. If you fly a plane and I do not, the new runway lights at the local airport will cost us each \$1000, and may be worth it to you but not to me. If they are worth more than \$2000 to you, they ought to be bought, at least if you'll pay for them. (Whether I ought to pay half is a separable issue.) But suppose you wouldn't pay more than \$1500 for the slight contribution the runway lights make to your safety. I propose that they shouldn't be bought.

For some among us that may not settle the issue. But I suggest that it is nevertheless a useful perspective, a relevant consideration, and although other considerations are relevant too, they may not be ethical ones, or if they are, they are not the ethical question of whether our little two-person society put too low a value on *your* life in deciding not to buy runway lights. (You may have put too low a value on *your* life, but I don't know why I should feel guilty about that. You may also need better lighting in your driveway.)

A harder question is what to do if you are poor and I am rich, and you use a cheap little airport and I use a better equipped one, and better runway lights are now available, and they are to be provided, if provided at all, out of a common fund for airport safety. If the lights will make as much difference to safety at your airport as at mine, and someone raises the question whether we should afford the same expensive lifesaving apparatus at your cheap airport as at my more lavish one, we really come up against the question: is your life worth as much as mine? (Leave aside the possibility that there are more of you to benefit from your lights, or fewer of you, compared with the traffic at my airport.)

Let's face the question. If you are poor and I am rich, is your life worth less than mine? "Worth" refers here to how much might properly be spent to protect it from some specified risk. (Notice that "worth" is an arithmetical construct: if we are willing to spend \$2000 per capita, but not more than \$2000, to protect

The American Review

everybody from something that is fatal for one person in 500, we shall spend an average of \$1,000,000 per life saved. In that respect and only in that respect have we "valued" each life at \$1,000,000. And when we ask what your life is worth or what my life is worth, and whether your life is worth less than my life, it helps greatly in straightening out what we have in mind if we ask, worth to whom? And who's to pay it?

If you are poorer than I, it is likely that *your* life is worth less to *you* in *your* money than *my* life is worth to *me* in *mine*. You cannot afford to pay as much for anything, including personal safety, as I can, precisely because you are poorer. But does this mean that a government air-safety program might properly decline to provide you those new runway lights, while my airport gets them at government expense?

The economist in me wants to say "yes." The policy adviser in me will go only as far as "maybe" or "it depends." It depends on who is ultimately putting up the money, and it depends on what the alternative is if you don't get the lights.

The affirmative argument contains something worth knowing. It runs as follows, in stages:

First, if the users of each runway had to pay for all the facilities at that runway, including safety facilities, we might find that the lower income users of your airport did not consider the marginal addition to safety contributed by the new lights to be worth the money, while the well-to-do people at my airport considered the lights a good bargain. We may have feelings just like yours about life and death; but the expenditures we ~~fore~~ go to pay for our lights are less important to us than if we were as poor as you. So one should not be surprised to find that our airport gets the lights and yours does not.

If now (stage two) a Federal safety authority were to consider requiring those new lights, the lights still to be paid for by each airport's users, to require you to buy the lights they would have to believe that you had made a mistake. Assuming that you knew the cost of the lights, they would have to assume either that you did not know how much the lights would reduce the risks of landing and takeoff, or that you didn't know how to weigh your own safety against your own money. But notice that they would have to believe that you had made a mistake from your own point of view; and if they can ascertain that you did understand how much reduction in risk the lights would provide, they must now think that you undervalue your own life or overvalue the other things you have to buy out of your income. Maybe you do; but you may not see why Federal air-safety authorities should have a better idea than you do of what your money is worth to you. You might reasonably protest the requirement that you equip your airport at your own expense with those expensive runway lights.

Now (stage three) say the authorities offer those new lights to your airport at general public expense. You may refuse them; but they will be free and, although they are worth less to you than what they cost, they are better than the old lights. Is the best outcome that you be provided those lights at public expenses? If the alternative is tax reduction—your taxes—you are really paying for these lights, paying taxes while receiving the lights "free." You might elect lower taxes, a smaller public air-safety budget and the old lights. But maybe, being poor, you pay much less in taxes than we do who fly in and out of the other airport. If you

decline the lights, you will save us most of the cost. Your share of the cost, in the taxes you would save, may be less than what the lights are worth to you. Now should you take the lights with a clear conscience?

The "Something Better" Approach

What the reader will have noticed both with gas rationing and with airport safety is a technique that economics commonly employs in addressing whether a particular condition or policy or program has virtue. That technique is to explore whether, in respect of alternative outcomes or consequences, some alternative policy or condition or program technique is "better." And "better" has a particular definition: superior, as an outcome, for everyone involved or, somewhat less ambitiously, for all the identifiable interests. Of gasoline rationing we explore whether there is something better. To find something better does not necessarily mean that rationing is not among the better policies, only that it is still inferior to some identifiable alternative. Sometimes, but not always, it is possible to measure or estimate a lower or upper bound to the magnitude of the superiority. And sometimes if an alternative is better for not quite everybody and disadvantageous to some, we can find a way to estimate the extent of disadvantage, or put an upper bound on it.

The example of runway lights illustrates precisely what this reasoning accomplishes and some of its limitations. It is concerned only with outcomes, not with appearances, not with processes. Most important, the reasoning does not demonstrate the superior policy or program technique is actually achievable. In particular, it may depend on institutions that do not exist or politics that are unacceptable or administrative determinations that are infeasible. I doubt whether many readers will be any more convinced than I am of the wisdom of publicly providing inferior airport safety at the airport utilized by lower income passengers and crews, even though in principle a deal could be struck according to which they obtained instead something (money, for example) worth more to them in their own judgment than the uneconomically modest improvement in runway safety.

Let me close this part of the discussion by reiterating with emphasis two points. First, this line of reasoning attempts, when honestly done, to reshuffle the consequences by rearranging proposed programs and comparing alternatives, leaving intact the original weighting system by which the outcomes for different people, or different interests, were to be evaluated. It explores alternative consequences, assessing those consequences from the points of view of all the affected parties, to see whether, whatever the proposal is or the situation being evaluated, there is "something better." It is therefore of limited, but genuine, usefulness. And the second point is that there is no mystery, nothing that cannot be penetrated by a responsible policy maker, one who is willing to make some effort to discover whether indeed there is something better.

Escaping the Dilemma of Equity

Among the most divisive issues that policy deals with is the distribution of

The American Review

income and wealth. For those among us who want to affect a disinterested stance and to judge right and wrong by reference to the public interest, with special concern for the ethical implications of particular policies or the overall distribution of income, what help can we get from economics?

On the relative virtues of different distributions of income, or on how much money a poor person has to get to justify an intervention that denies a dollar to somebody who is not poor, the answer is "not much." True to the somewhat ethically evasive character that I have been imputing to economics, economic reasoning is better at helping to choose among ways to accomplish a distributional objective than at helping to choose objectives. It can help in minimizing the cost to the rich of doing something for the poor. And in case that doesn't interest you, economic reasoning can help to point out that it ought to! There is more for the poor, at any given cost to the rich, if you do it in the least wasteful way. And often the way economics does this is simply by looking at two things at the same time.

The Market Ethic

Nothing distinguishes economists from other people as much as a belief in the market system, or what some call the free market. A perennial difficulty in dealing with economics and policy is the inability of people who are not economists, and some who are, to ascertain how much of an economist's confidence in the way markets work is faith and how much is analysis and observation. How much is due to the economist's observing the way markets work and judging actual outcomes, and how much is a belief that the process is right and just?

The problem is compounded because some economists do identify markets with freedom of choice, or construe markets as processes that yield returns that are commensurate with an individual's deserts. A conclusion that arises in the analysis of a perfectly working competitive market is that people who work for hire are paid amounts equivalent to their marginal contributions to the total product, to the difference it makes if one's contribution is withdrawn while the rest of the system continues. An ethical question is whether one's marginal product constitutes an appropriate rate of remuneration. Critics of the theory, however, typically direct their energies toward the empirical issue, arguing that actual markets work differently. Nevertheless, there are economists who have given considerable thought to the matter who find that a system that distributes the fruits of economic activity in accordance with marginal contributions, be they contributions in effort or ideas or property, is ethically attractive, and others who have given considerable thought to it and find that such a system has great practical merit but little ethical claim. Most of these others believe there is a need for policies to readjust the results.

There is even an important Socialist school of market economics, pioneered by Abba Lerner and Oscar Lange in the 1930s, that asserts that pricing in a Socialist economy should mimic the pricing of a perfectly competitive free market, that such an economy would be least wasteful of resources, and that extramarket income transfers should compensate for any result that one does not like.

And there is a large body of professional opinion among economists to the

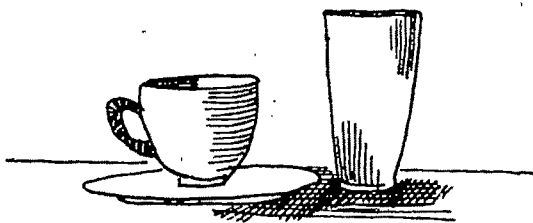
effect that markets left to themselves may turn in a pretty poor performance, but not nearly as poor as when tinkered with, especially when the tinkering is simplistically done or done cleverly to disguise the size and distribution of the costs or losses associated with some "innocuous" favoritism.

Whether or not an economist shares the ethic or the ideology that values the working of the market system for its own sake (or that identifies it not only *with* personal freedom but *as* personal freedom), most professional economists accept certain principles that others, if not the economists themselves, would recognize to have ethical content.

An example is incentives. Economists see economic incentives operating everywhere; they find nothing offensive or coercive about the responses of people to economic opportunities and sanctions; they have no interest in overcoming or opposing incentives for the sake of victory over an enemy; and they have a predilection toward tilting incentives to induce people to behave in ways that are collectively more rewarding or less frustrating. You can usually tell an economist from a noneconomist by asking whether at the peak season for tourism and camping there should be substantial entrance fees at the campgrounds of national parks.

A related touchstone of market economics is the idea that most people are better at spending their own money than somebody else is at spending it for them. Sometimes this is directly elevated into an ethical principle: the consumer's right to make his own mistakes. But usually it is simply that giving a poor family a shopping cart filled from the shelves of a supermarket is not as good as giving them the money and letting them do their own shopping. The idea is that *they* will get more for *your* money if *they* get to spend it.

Economists have a long checklist of exceptions to this principle, exceptions from the point of view of that family's welfare and from other points of view, but generally the economist thinks the burden of proof belongs on those who want to give food stamps or subway tokens or eyeglasses to the poor and the elderly, not money. Proof may not be hard to come by; but the burden, for most economists, should be on those who don't trust the efficacy of money. It often sounds like an ethical principle. Maybe it is. □



LANGUAGE CRESTING LIKE A WAVE

By DOUGLAS CRASE

The reviewer is a poet and the author of *The Revisionist* and a fellow of the New York Institute of Humanities.

A Wave

By John Ashbery.
Viking. 89 pp.

IN his new book of poems, *A Wave*, John Ashbery is writing an American form of English so rocmy and sure that its appearance among us amounts to a national gift. "I guess I was trying to 'democratize' language" is the way Ashbery put it, referring in a recent interview to the prose-poem meditations in his *Three Poems* (1972). Now in his 11th major collection, he has placed the vast prose vistas of *Three Poems* within the lyric measures he realized most explicitly in *Houseboat Days* (1977). In retrospect, it seems an inevitable triumph; and the trio of *Three Poems*, *Houseboat Days* and *A Wave* will probably be seen by his audience as the indispensable core of Ashbery's work.

Not everyone is a member of that audience. But someone approaching Ashbery's poetry for the first time, even for the exasperated second time, will be generously greeted by *A Wave*; the poems in this volume are as lovingly addressed to the reader as any in American poetry since Walt Whitman

offered to stop somewhere waiting for you. "Just walking around," writes Ashbery in a poem of that title,

*You always seemed to be
traveling in a circle.
And now that the end is near*

*The segments of the trip
swing open like an orange.
There is light in there, and
mystery and food.*

*Come see it. Come not for
me but it.
But if I am still there, grant
that we may see each other.*

This is plangent and supplicant. Still, is it enough to explain a poet's growing influence to say he is affectionate toward the reader or has tried to "democratize" language?

A more complete explanation would have to recognize how this poet writes not just in American, but in an ionized version that looses the poem from attachment to anyone or anywhere in particular. Ashbery is insouciant about place; he is prodigal with pronouns, profligate with tenses and extravagant with evasion and hyperbole. Who, what, where, why and when—they are spun off like freed electrons. The result is a poem that really is "ionized"—a poem seeking to combine. Did the poet ask you to "grant that we may see each other"? The poem likewise seeks to be completed in that meeting. The Ashbery reader must be not so much reader as communicant.

Much of Ashbery's work is available today in some dozen foreign languages. Readers in those languages are not likely to lust after a precise rendering of American vernacular, even if it could survive translation. More likely,

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they too are attracted by the translatable ionization of syntax and grammar that turns them into communicants. From *A Wave*, an example certain to find its translators soon is the beautiful if foreboding "Rain Moving In":

*The blackboard is erased in
the attic
And the wind turns up the
light of the stars,
Sinewy now. Someone will
find out, someone will know.
And if somewhere on this
great planet
The truth is discovered, a
patch of it, dried, glazed
by the sun,
It will just hang on, in its own
infamy, humility. No one
Will be better for it, but
things can't get any worse.
Just keep playing, mastering
as you do the step
Into disorder this one meant.
Don't you see
It's all we can do?
Meanwhile, great fires
Arise, as of haystacks aflame.
The dial has been set
And that's ominous, but all
your graciousness in living
Conspires with it, now that
this is our home:
A place to be from, and have
people ask about.*

It is remarkable that a poem so periphrastic and evasive can be so frankly chilling at the same time. Hard to believe, on this evidence, that Ashbery is sometimes accused of writing frivolous verse.

As the poem's communicant you can find in it what you please. "I contain multitudes," enthused Whitman. "So much variation/In what is essentially a

one-horse town," writes Ashbery, and it doesn't sound like he's complaining either. At a reading early in 1984, Ashbery told his audience how an idea in "At North Farm" had come from the Finnish folk epic the *Kalevala*. Literary critic Helen Vendler has since pointed out the trace of Keats in that same poem. Yes, our culture is already crowded with literary goodies; but the poet of *A Wave*, though he acknowledges "the luck of speaking out/A little too late," seems to be pleasantly surprised at his luck. How nice to have awakened among all the treasures that are yours to rearrange when you live at the apex, spatially and temporally, of empire:

*It takes only a minute
revision, and see—the thing
Is there in all its interested
variegatedness,
With prospects and walks
curling away, never to be
followed,
A civilized concern,
a never being alone.*

Civilized but not overtly committed, perhaps he can deploy each "thing" as the symbol of nothing except what it appears to be in the enjoyable present.

Described this way, Ashbery's prospects and walks sound a lot like post-modernism, and if you feel strongly about the post-modernist ethos, you will have started to make up your mind about this book. Critic Fredric Jameson, having done much to define post-modernism, now laments it as a "failure of the new," a sad admission that the consumer economy has rendered us "incapable of achieving esthetic representations of our own current experience," our times. Instead, we combine off-the-shelf allusions (Keats and

The American Review

the *Kalevala* are good examples) in a pastiche of culture that equals no culture, as all colors together equal none. But before giving way to a verdict of despair in the case of *A Wave*, we ought to remember we are dealing with a poet here, and remember what a poet really does. Allusions to Keats and the *Kalevala* are not the pertinent evidence if a poet, as no-nonsense Dr. Johnson informs me in his dictionary, is "one who writes in measure." Period.

It sounds so old-fashioned, measure. What can it have to do with a poem like "Rain Moving In"—the one with the flaming haystacks? No *abba* rhyme scheme, no iambic pentameter, but look—14 lines, and at lines eight and nine even a "step/Into disorder" to turn us into the sestet. The poem is a sonnet. There are also two double sonnets, a tailed sonnet, even a heroic sonnet in this book. Ashbery has reclaimed the form so thoroughly it took me much sleuthing to be sure of its presence.

In *A Wave*, measure also shows itself in the longish lines that are Ashbery's special contribution to American poetry and a powerful influence on the work of younger poets. With their prosy cadence and many unaccented syllables, with their strong and frequently medial caesura (the pause within the line), his lines often evoke the French alexandrine—itself brought close to free verse in the works of Verlaine and Rimbaud. If Ashbery's truly is a free verse that beats to a distant alexandrine, then we have a new American measure. Lax and roomy, it would be just the thing to accommodate the poet's need to write in measure with Emerson's stern and just admonition that in America it is the meter-making argument and not the meter that makes the poem. Make a sonnet,

say, from such a measure, and you've engaged not in pastiche, but in rejuvenation.

The brave hearts of every generation must need to feel their times are new, and worth imaging in selves and souls. How much those feelings depend on the assurance that the planet has prospects beyond one's own lifetime is a matter we can only speculate on. Certainly there are millions throughout Europe and North America who believe they have been dispossessed of that assurance, and long to have it back. They do not all, even most, read John Ashbery. But their longing helps explain further how his work has become a central event in poetry. In the face of factual dispossession, Ashbery has created a language that restores newness as you read, a language that is always cresting with potential like a wave. □



THE EPITOME OF SELF-RESTRAINT

By T.J. JACKSON LEARS

The reviewer is a cultural historian and the author of *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*.

Cincinnatus: George Washington and the Enlightenment.

By Garry Wills.

Doubleday. 272 pp

IN *Inventing America*, Garry Wills rediscovered the importance of 18th-century moral philosophy to the Declaration of Independence, demonstrating that Thomas Jefferson and his contemporaries were concerned with communal welfare as well as with individual rights. In *Cincinnatus*, Wills, a professor of history at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, deftly explores the relationship between George Washington's public career and popular representations of it. In fact and myth, Washington became Cincinnatus—the Roman farmer who left his plow to lead the republic in an hour of crisis, returning to private life as soon as the peril was ended. In Wills's hands, the image of Cincinnatus also illuminates early American attitudes toward power and morality.

The key was self-restraint, and Washington epitomized it at every turn of his career. The haste with which he resigned his commission at the end of the War of Independence first linked Washington to the Cincinnatus myth;

the reluctance with which he returned in 1788 to public life as President reinforced the popular impression. From his resignation in 1783 to the Farewell Address in September 1796, Washington "had to use power most adroitly in order to give it up in useful ways." Unlike other more charismatic American leaders, he could relinquish power gracefully because he believed in what Wills calls the "republican ideology"; it included a "vision of emergency powers given to some worthy man who proves his worthiness by refusing to exercise the powers beyond the emergency's demands." The early American republic's central tenet: power is most usefully exercised when it is most carefully contained.

Wills draws on a variety of sources to demonstrate his point. He examines the shift from biblical to classical republican imagery, showing how Parson Weems' homiletic *Life of Washington* (1800) emphasized the Founding Father's simple virtues and eclipsed such lumbering epics as Timothy Dwight's *Conquest of Canaan* (1785), which had depicted Washington as a latter-day Moses. Wills contrasts the failure of Horatio Greenough's statue of Washington as a grandiose and bare-chested Zeus with the success of Jean-Antoine Houdon's earlier statue in Richmond (1788). The latter presented the leader preparing to return to the plow—a triumph of restraint over pomp.

For all its virtues, *Cincinnatus* is hobbled by Wills' one-sided view of the historical process. Great men and great ideas march in procession across the stage of history; the importance of changes in popular thinking or of underlying economic arrangements is largely ignored or dismissed. For example, the process of nation building

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involved more than the stately march to independence led by Washington; it also required a widespread popular movement to rid the land of British "luxury" and "corruption." And that movement was fired by evangelical Protestantism. Focusing on the great men, Wills overlooks the popular evangelical currents that influenced the emerging civil religion.

Wills' approach also obscures the contradictions between republican reverence for simplicity of life and the nation's developing capitalist economy. American republicans, including Washington and Jefferson, viewed the independent yeoman as the ideal "economic man" and held up "public virtue" as an antidote to the lust for private gain. Yet they exemplified the virtues of self-control and disciplined achievement that were well suited to the accumulation of capital.

Despite its flaws, *Cincinnatus* remains an elegant and compelling book. It describes the meaning of Washington's career to his own contemporaries and explains it to us, recalling America's early public ideals. □



COLLISIONS AND COOPERATIONS

By NAOMI BLIVEN

The reviewer, who has reviewed books for *The New Yorker* since 1958, is co-author of *New York: The Story of the World's Most Exciting City*

Cities and the Wealth of Nations: Principles of Economic Life.

By Jane Jacobs.

Random House. 257 pp.

JANE JACOBS' lively and original book sets forth an ambitious theory of economic development and economic decline. It opens with a brisk review of assorted economic theories, dating from the 18th to the 20th century, that unanimously insist that stagflation is impossible. Then Jacobs points out that stagflation not only is possible but has always been common—it is the normal condition of underdeveloped economies, where high unemployment and high prices go hand in hand. One reason that this nearly self-evident truth has escaped economists, Jacobs maintains, is that they regard as economic units what are really collections of disparate economies. The genuine operating economic unit, she holds, is not a nation but a city, and a particular kind of city—not a capital, market or garrison (though it may also be any of these) but an "import-replacing" city, which repeatedly develops new manufactures to replace its earlier purchases abroad.

An example is Venice, which started

Abridged by permission; ©1984 Naomi Bliven. Originally in *The New Yorker*.

as a tiny, dank refuge with little to sell in the markets of Constantinople except salt and timber from the hinterland. Venetians brought back Byzantine luxury goods, which they peddled to European cities more backward than their own, and presently they began manufacturing copies of these imported wares. Venice's activity sparked its backward trading partners. They began copying Venice's copies while Venice went on to make other things, and the import-replacing process recurred in cities all across medieval Europe.

As a 20th-century example of the import-replacing process Jacobs offers Tokyo's bicycle-manufacturing industry, which developed from shops that repaired imported bicycles. Import-replacing cities not only stimulate each other but create flourishing regions around themselves, which "pack a lot of economic life" into small areas and "produce amply and diversely for their own people . . . as well as for others."

Jacobs believes that prosperity and economic development depend upon import-replacing cities, and reminds us that aid intended to promote development has been wasted wherever such cities do not exist. . . . Economic development is not equipment that can be bought but a small-scale do-it-yourself process of change—of activities that increase versatility and create networks among small manufacturers which help innovation. . . .

Although Jacobs regards cities and their regions as the movers of economic development, their effect on "supply regions," which produce raw materials, can be destructive unless the supply regions develop their own import-replacing cities. . . . A virtue of import-replacing cities—their creativity—can be harmful to supply regions, as when manufacturers substitute one kind of

raw material for another. Import-replacing cities can also unbalance relations with farm areas by exporting too much of their own ingenuity. Most inventions or discoveries that increase productivity on the land come from urban centers and show landowners how to use less labor, but cities cannot always create enough jobs for unemployed farm workers. The Green Revolution has increased food production in several underdeveloped countries, but it has also increased unemployment.

Despite the damage that import-replacing cities can do, they remain, in Jacobs' view, more often victims than villains, forced to carry impossible financial burdens by nations and empires, which drain cities to pay for welfare and warfare, and misinform cities about their economic performance by combining all transactions in a giant stew—the national currency. Nations and empires force the cities into what Jacobs calls "transactions of decline," which she places under three headings: prolonged military spending; prolonged subsidies to poor regions and poor people; and too much trade with underdeveloped nations or colonies. . . .

Jacobs' ideal—the independent import-replacing city and its region, with its own currency and its own tariff policy—has been a feature of great periods of development such as classical Greece and medieval Europe. And Singapore thrives today. Most such cities, however, have been incorporated into nations or empires, and empires are peculiarly associated with economic decline. Jacobs is painfully graphic in recalling historic periods when the trading links between overburdened cities snapped, and the cities and their regions stagnated and many of their supply regions were bypassed by the trickle of trade that survived. She sug-

The American Review

gests that many of today's "bypassed subsistence economies" are not undeveloped but have declined after losing their connections to developing economies....

Jacobs points out that so far the stagnation of some cities has been offset by the rise of others, so the world's economy has never fallen into stagnation. Her nightmare scenario is that cities in too many places may stagnate at once or in quick succession.

Jacobs' purpose is not to panic her readers. Nor is to offer a practical program, since she knows that no country is likely to divide itself into sovereign city-states. Her most immediate recommendation—that underdeveloped cities trade more with each other and less with developed countries—is not easy to implement. Is her book, then, a charming but idle exercise? I think not. I think it is probably more important and more profound than we—or I—can grasp, because the author is working toward a new sensibility, which demands a change not only in how we think but in how we feel and what we value. That sensibility speaks for the empirical, asks us to respect the unexpected, and upsets the intellectual hierarchy in which the abstract takes precedence over the concrete, the head over the hand....

Jacobs' notion is that economic life develops from just such free, chancy or unpredictable collisions and cooperations, and though her affection for cities leads her to overstate their inherently peaceful nature, she is probably right in contrasting the "military art" with economics, and in suggesting that "many assumptions, intuitions and virtues that work very well in the one serve badly in the other." The improvisation that she believes economic health depends on—the opportunistic

or insightful ability to see the possibilities of even petty novelties (plastics first appeared in toys and kitchen gadgets)—is totally at odds with the military kind of thinking that devises "industrial strategies" to meet "targets," and relies upon formal structures and will instead of ingenuity and spontaneity....

Jacobs values—variety and versatility—are exceedingly humane, as in her objection to the ideal that sees efficiency in specialization, including the one-crop specialization of supply regions: "An economy that contains few different sorts of niches for people's differing skills, interests and imaginations is not efficient." Yet her humanness also asks that we relinquish certain human longings, among them the yearning for certainty, for systems, plans and creeds; her own ideas, for example, cannot be placed in those familiar pigeonholes "left" and "right." It is true that in favoring what she calls the "open-ended" rather than the "goal-oriented" approach to economic life her sensibility is considerably more cheerful, or playful, than our usual do-or-die approach to the economy. On the other hand, human beings may find it difficult to renounce the goal, or the ideal, of attaining utopia and to accept instead the ideal of an economy that is an unending process of surprise, discovery and change. Such renunciation and such acceptance entail disappointment—the abandonment of a dream—but they may well be more realistic than the visions and the isms contending for our allegiance nowadays. □



MAKING NEW THINGS HAPPEN

By JACK D. KIRWAN

The reviewer is assistant editor of
The Energy Journal.

*Three Degrees Above Zero: Bell Labs
in the Information Age.*

By Jeremy Bernstein.
Scribner's. 232 pp.

MANY people have heard of Bell Labs, but it takes a book like this to make the non-specialist realize what an impact this household name has had. Bell Labs is no more about "just telephones" than *Moby Dick* is concerned with "just whaling." If it hadn't been for the discoveries that came out of Bell Labs, there would not be an "information age" as we know it today.

The book's title comes from the observation that the average temperature of the universe is three degrees above absolute zero. This was discovered 20 years ago by Arno A. Penzias and Robert W. Wilson, two Nobel prize-winning Bell radio astronomers. And why does Bell Labs have worldclass radio astronomers on the payroll? That's only one of the many fascinating things this revealing study tells.

The story of Bell Labs is the story of technological innovation. But *Three Degrees Above Zero* is the story of the people who made new things happen. As Bernstein says, "It dawned on me that the way to write about Bell Labs was, in the first instance, to break the

subject up into people; to construct a kind of mosaic of people that, when assembled, would make a coherent sample of the whole."

Bernstein, a physicist and seasoned *New Yorker* journalist, is at his best dealing with the human drama of Bell. He is slightly less successful in describing the technologies—computers, optical communications, transistors, solid-state physics and the like. Still, once you've read the book, you should have a solid understanding of these technologies which are changing many eternal verities.

One of the most interesting sections of *Three Degrees Above Zero* is the chapter on BELLE, the chess-playing computer that can beat 99 percent of the players in the world today. In 1983 the International Chess Federation gave it ("her" to some) an official master rating. One anecdote provides an indication of BELLE's savvy: some years back, the great Bobby Fischer made a brilliant queen sacrifice against Donald Byrne in what was later called the game of the century. It was truly a stroke of genius, and 14 moves later Byrne gave up. Bernstein asked Ken Thompson, one of BELLE's creators, if the computer, given the same position on a chess-board, could have found the move. Thompson replied that "he had done the experiment. In 19 seconds the machine sacrificed the queen and then went on to win the game."

But the razzle-dazzle of basic research constitutes only 10 percent (in terms of money and manpower) of the laboratory's effort. As Bernstein writes, "The other 90 percent has been devoted to development connected directly to communications and to what is known at Bell as telephony—the art and science of the telephone." This may be the most striking part of the

Bell Labs story—like watching the Olympic gymnasts in Los Angeles. The art seems effortless; but it is only when it's rerun in slow motion (as Bernstein does with telephony) that you realize the amount of interrelated expertise that goes into an "effortless" performance. □

PERPETUAL PILGRIMS

By JOSEPH M. McSHANE

The reviewer, a Jesuit priest, teaches religious studies at LeMoyne College in Syracuse, New York.

*Pilgrims in Their Own Land:
500 Years of Religion in America.*

By Martin E. Marty.
Little, Brown. 500 pp.

ALL too frequently comprehensive histories of American religion are written from a decidedly English Protestant point of view. The limitations that result from such a bias are unfortunate. Whether unwittingly or by design, such histories create a dangerously rigid calculus of religious acceptability that invites the reader to judge the Americanness of different religious groups on the basis of their conformity to or descent from the dominant English Protestant forms that the author's bias enshrines as the norms of American religion.

In *Pilgrims in Their Own Land*, Martin E. Marty, professor of church his-

tory at the University of Chicago and one of the most perceptive and indefatigable chroniclers of U.S. religious history and mores, has produced a study that both avoids the usual traps into which many religious historians fall and goes a long way toward providing a truly inclusive history of his subject.

Marty's study, which is as much an essay on religious style and identity as it is a recounting of religious history, is organized around the late French philosopher Jacques Maritain's observation that Americans remain pilgrims in the land centuries after the arrival of their ancestors on American soil. Marty's decision to explain American religious history in the light of this observation is beneficial for several reasons. Perhaps most important, the theme of pilgrimage serves as a leveling (all groups share a common initial status and a common orientation) as well as a richly descriptive metaphor that allows him not only to account for the restless and unfinished nature of American religiousness, but also to treat all of the nation's religious bodies in a marvelously evenhanded way.

In the light of his organizing theme, he highlights those common challenges that all religious groups have faced in America and the ways in which those challenges have given birth to a style that is distinctly American. For instance, in what could be called a religious twist on Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis, he examines the ways in which the land (its vastness, its promise, its hardships and its both liberating and problematic distance from various Old Worlds) has influenced the ways in which piety has had to exert itself, adapt and connive to carve out a place for itself. In addition, he explores the way in which the complex political

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terrain has served to foster both competitive religious tribalism and religious civility as well as America's civil religion. In Marty's eyes, the collision of piety and these daunting circumstances has created a distinctly (and marvelously common) religious style that is restless, muscular and resourceful, that finds its logical expression in crusades, causes, itinerancy and revivalism, and that is as likely to produce confrontations and ironies as it is to foster heroics.

As a result of these key insights, Marty is able to see phenomena, movements and personalities that others would see as countervailing or strange as undeniably American. Hence, in his pantheon of representative American religious figures, the Jesuit missionary Eusebio Kino and theologian John Courtney Murray, the peripatetic early Mormons and the popular black preacher Father Divine take their places next to such generally revered figures of mainstream Protestantism as Jonathan Edwards and the frontier evangelist Peter Cartwright, for in Marty's eyes all responded creditably and in typically American fashion to the challenges offered by America's mental, political and physical geographies.

If Marty's openness to the full range of American religious forms corrects the failures of past historians by introducing a much needed degree of inclusive balance to the retelling of U.S. religious history, his appreciation of the dynamic nature of American piety (or pieties) protects him from despair in the face of apparent religious declines. He seems to argue that since an ability to adapt is characteristic of American religion, if only we were open to new forms and strategies, we would be able to see and celebrate the

continuing vitality of faith in America.

This is a rare book that at once delights and educates. I fear, however, that the ease with which it reads and the wit and crispness with which it was written may cause some to dismiss it as "pop history." In reality, it is a book whose seeming effortlessness conceals a depth of scholarship that is the result of years of reflection on a wealth of events, sources and theories. □

SCULPTURE IN STEEL AND CONCRETE

By JOSEPH E. ILLICK

The reviewer, now a professor of history at San Francisco State University, formerly taught civil engineering at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Tower and the Bridge: The New Art of Structural Engineering.

By David P. Billington.

Basic Books. 306 pp.

IN *The Tower and the Bridge*, David Billington, a professor in Princeton's civil engineering department, focuses on an elite group of structural engineers who, he believes, qualify both as public servants and as artists. In their creative hands engineering has become a tool of human expression whose elegance is never attained at the expense of an efficient use of materials or

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The American Review

a regard for economic realities.

Since this book is well illustrated, structural art's esthetic power is abundantly evident. It was first achieved with iron, available in almost unlimited quantities from the start of the Industrial Revolution in mid-18th-century Britain, and the only alternative to wood and stone until the 1880s. Thereafter, steel and concrete came into their own. As materials changed, so did the ways of juxtaposing them and the geometrical forms of construction. The engineer could expand his creative horizons to the utmost, yet at the same time rigorously reduce costs.

Unlike technology and art, says the author, technology and science do not march hand in hand, for the first "is the making of things that did not previously exist," the second "the discovery of things that have long existed." Although the dichotomy seems facile and strained, Billington contends that these activities develop independently more often than they intersect. I wish he had explicitly considered technical progress in the light of Thomas Kuhn's argument that our understanding of the natural world advances not through the gradual accumulation of knowledge but from the relatively sudden replacement of one scientific world view by another.

Billington also divides technology into the "static" and the "dynamic," structures and machines: "Structures stand for continuity, tradition and protection of society; machines for change, mobility and risk. There is a constant tension between these two types of objects—between the extremes of a frozen society where structure dominates and a frantic society dominated by machinery."

Billington has a strong interest in the social and symbolic implications of en-

gineering. He wants to promote democratic values by encouraging design competitions—as he sees it, the way to get the best work at the lowest cost. As for symbolism, he tells us: "When structure and form are one the result is a lightness, even a fragility, which closely parallels the essence of a free and open society."

From these general considerations Billington turns to the artists themselves. The most prominent man who embraced the new kind of thinking that became possible with the appearance of large quantities of cheap iron was a Scottish bridge builder named Thomas Telford. Virtually ignorant of—and consequently unconstrained by—scientific theory, he relied on his practical field experience and his imagination, taking risks that reflected the ferment of the times, the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Intuitively Telford saw that iron removed much of the distinction between art and craft, that now engineering "could take its place with the other plastic and visual arts of painting, sculpture and architecture."

The aphorism has it that form follows function; Billington shows that with the ever widening freedom of choice made possible by new materials, function follows form. He illustrates this in the work of major figures (Telford, Gustave Eiffel, John Roebling) and other lesser lights, as well as in his discussion of developments in Germany, Italy and Spain.

The pattern became more apparent in the age of steel and concrete, when new esthetic theories fed the imagination, and private funding for skyscrapers and factories supplemented public expenditure on bridges. Like their counterparts in earlier times, these 20th-century achievements have symbolic and social implications. Fazlur

Khan's Hancock Building in Chicago "expresses private investment and technology" in the service of creative self-expression and therefore "defies master plans and art juries." Christian Menn's Ganter Bridge in Switzerland "is the other side; it expresses government planning of public works essential to democratic societies."

Of the two kinds of structures, Billington's first love is the bridge, which offers greater possibilities for viewing the designer's artistry. One of the favored form's true masters was New York's Othmar Ammann, who created two cantilever bridges, one suspension and one arch. In addition, he had a hand in San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

More accomplished was Robert Maillart, the Swiss engineer who united German science and French daring. Reinforcing concrete with steel, he put up bridges and buildings that combin-

ed the compressive strength of the former with the tensile strength of the latter and simultaneously withstood concentrated pressure and bending. Where some of his colleagues "saw the future as new material, Maillart saw it as new forms," we are told persuasively.

Despite its few lapses, I find Billington's book admirable. He has attempted a major reinterpretation of technology's relationship with art, raising questions that are provocative even if his answers are not always fully satisfying. At a moment when, as he puts it, "technology seems to stand for despoiling both the city and country," he reminds us that the best engineering still speaks to our most deeply held political and moral beliefs. His effort to share the engineer's knowledge provides a bridge, if not a tower, that can only enhance the democratic culture he believes in, and that is reflected in our greatest monuments. □

CHOREOGRAPHER OF CONSERVATISM

By ADAM MEYERSON

The reviewer is editor of *Policy Review*.

The Rise of the Right.

By William A. Rusher.

William Morrow. 328 pp.

BOLD-PUCKISH, gauntlet-throwing, sentence-dashing William F. Buckley Jr. launched the magazine *National Review* in 1955. Never since has American political debate

been the same. With his panache and agile wit, Buckley freed conservatism of its fuddy-duddy aura. And he amassed in *National Review* such mighty intellects as Frank Meyer, Whittaker Chambers, James Burnham and Willmoore Kendall, who week after week, then fortnight after fortnight, battered down the monopoly of liberalism and socialism in American thought. So regnant had the liberal orthodoxy been that Buckley proclaimed in his inaugural issue, only half in jest, that *National Review* "stands athwart history, yelling Stop." It is a measure of his success that conservatives today can look

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The American Review

eagerly upon the 21st century, and claim that their time has come.

One of Buckley's shrewdest decisions was to appoint as publisher a young Wall Street lawyer, who arrived at *National Review* in 1957 and stuck to his post to this day. William A. Rusher brought to the magazine both his financial acumen and a keen understanding of practical coalition-forging politics. He became an influential columnist and television personality in his own right, though more sober than the stylish Buckley. And working behind the scenes for such organizations as the Draft Goldwater Committee and the Young Americans for Freedom, Rusher has been one of the principal choreographers of the modern conservative movement.

Rusher has now published a political memoir, aptly entitled *The Rise of the Right*. His story opens with Lionel Trilling's remark in 1950 that "in the United States at this time liberalism is not only the dominant but even the sole intellectual tradition. For it is the plain fact that there are no conservative or reactionary ideas in general circulation." It closes with the Administration of Ronald Reagan. In between, it is packed with information on the organizations and campaigns that paved the way for conservative victory—from Young Americans for Freedom to the Moral Majority, from the New York Conservative Party to the Reagan campaign against Richard Nixon.

In explaining the growth of conservatism, Rusher properly gives center stage to the Draft Goldwater mobilization (which led to Senator Barry Goldwater's nomination as the 1964 Republican Presidential candidate). Senator Goldwater suffered a devastating political spill in the election, but his candidacy galvanized tens of thousands of

grassroots activists and inaugurated the political career of Ronald Reagan.

From an organizational point of view, the most significant legacy of 1964 was that conservatives took the lead in mailing-list technology. Thanks to direct-mail wizards such as Richard Viguerie, conservative candidates were able to raise funds from an extraordinarily broad base of \$25 and \$50 donors, while listless liberals relied on labor unions and a few rich contributors. Just as important, as Rusher puts it, direct mail was "a brand-new avenue of national communications for political purposes." Conservatives no longer had to worry so much about the liberal media distorting their message. They could go directly to voters through the post office.

The Goldwater campaign was also a harbinger of a new and highly effective political strategy. For the first time, conservative Republicans unhitched their elephants from the Dewey-Eisenhower-Rockefeller northeastern wing of the party, and started trying to appeal to the fastest growing population centers, the South and the West. The Right was no longer cloistered in boardrooms and country clubs. It was taking its message to suburban shopping malls and stock car races and ethnic festivals. The goal was to weld a coalition between economic conservatives from the GOP and social conservatives who had traditionally been Democrats and independents. As Rusher notes, Senator Goldwater wasn't entirely comfortable with this strategy or with the ideologues who had done the most to nominate him. But Rusher argues that 1964 "marked a major shift in the control of the Republican Party from the eastern liberals to an aggressively conservative coalition of the South, the Midwest and the

Choreographer of Conservatism

West." As such, it foreshadowed a conservative electoral majority.

Rusher reserves his harshest criticism for Richard Nixon. Rusher calls conservative support for Nixon "the blunder of 1968," and in 1972 he broke with his *National Review* colleagues in refusing to endorse Nixon's reelection. By contrast, Rusher departs from many of his conservative brethren in his unequivocal praise for President Reagan: "Conservatism, it seemed to me, not only had never had a finer champion in the White House but, in the light of the odds in politics, could rarely if ever expect to be quite so lucky again."

Over the years, conservatives have often disputed the boundaries of their movement. Rusher recalls the battles between libertarians and traditionalists in the 1950s, as well as *National Review's* denunciation of the conspiracy theories of the John Birch Society.

Rusher might also have devoted a little more attention to two phenomena in recent years that go a long way toward explaining why Ronald Reagan is in the White House today.

The first is the democratization of conservatives' economic rhetoric. Ronald Reagan, Jack Kemp, Lew Lehrman, Newt Gingrich and other conservatives have accomplished one of the most astonishing political transformations in American history: they have turned smaller government, hard money—even, perhaps, the gold standard—and the free market into populist causes. By embracing the tax revolt, they have successfully portrayed liberals as backers of special interests and conservatives as champions of the little guy. At the start of *The Rise of the Right*, Rusher cites Russell Kirk's "canons of conservative thought," among them the "conviction that civi-

lized society requires orders and classes." This idea is totally foreign to the new populist conservatism; which embraces opportunity and upward mobility for all Americans.

The second change is that conservative politicians have made their peace with the welfare state. Ronald Reagan largely accepted Social Security and Medicare in 1980, as Barry Goldwater did not in 1964. This may or may not be an advance. But it helps to explain why Ronald Reagan won and Barry Goldwater did not. One of the greatest challenges for President Reagan will be to sustain his tax-cut populism. To do so, he will have to gain political support for cuts in transfer payments, support that has always eluded conservatives in the past.

The Rise of the Right is written for a conservative audience that shares most of the author's assumptions. It is not likely to win converts among liberals, but ought to give them a better idea of why they have been losing. Moderates may not feel that Rusher is speaking to them. But for anyone interested in the emergence of the conservative movement as one of the most powerful political forces in America, Rusher's book is fascinating history and an indispensable guide. □



ASTRONOMERS AT WORK

By LEE DEMBART

The reviewer is a *Los Angeles Times* editorial writer.

Frozen Star: Of Pulsars, Black Holes and the Fate of Stars.

By George Greenstein.
Freundlich. 274 pp.

IN the realm of science each answered question raises a dozen new questions that scientists didn't know enough to ask before. And of all the sciences, this is especially true in astronomy, where the explosion of knowledge has been outpaced by the explosion of ignorance it engenders.

Frozen Star, written for the interested layman by an accomplished astrophysicist, deals with both the knowledge and the ignorance that have been amassed in this century and particularly in the last 20 years, since radio telescopes turned the universe on its head. It is a beautifully written book, conveying the facts and, more important, the wonder of science.

Here are scientists at work: Arthur Eddington escaping the draft during World War I to test Einstein's theory of relativity; Jocelyn Bell, a graduate student, discovering pulsars and wondering what they are; G. Richard Huguenin building a huge radio telescope on the cheap in the Massachusetts wilderness; Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, alone in his room at Cambridge, working out the theory of white

dwarfs; and Stephen Hawking, confined to a wheel-chair, barely able to move, yet spinning out brilliant and beautiful mathematics.

To Greenstein, the process is almost more rewarding than the results. "Good science does not always involve being right," he says, "at least not in every detail. It is far more important to paint the broad outlines of a subject, to discover entirely new phenomena and to point the way to new and fruitful investigations.

"Intuition and taste have an important role to play in science," he says. "Such terms as 'belief,' 'faith' and the like may sound strange. But they should not. The impression that science is solely guided by logic rests on a lack of appreciation of the layers upon layers of ambiguity that actually surround the profession."

One of his many themes is the interaction of science and technology. Which drives which? On the one hand, progress in astronomy is inextricably tied to the invention and development of telescopes. On the other hand, "If every computer on Earth were magically to vanish, I have no doubt that science would continue to flourish," Greenstein writes. "The computer is only a tool," and discoveries are made "by the workings of a creative mind."

The book illustrates the interplay between theory and observation. Neutron stars were predicted long before they were found. Ditto black holes, only one of which has ever been found, and that by accident. It turns out that Einstein's theories of physics have remarkable explanatory power in the far reaches of the universe, just as paradoxical yet inescapable as they are close by.

In the midst of all this, Greenstein's book is distinguished popular science,

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Astronomers at Work

conveying the facts and theories as they are currently known and believed. Discoveries in astronomy are made with such rapidity these days that it is sometimes difficult to keep all the elements straight and remember what relates to what, or what refutes what. Greenstein draws them all together into a comprehensive whole, and his most characteristic statement is: "We

don't know." Where there are competing explanations for phenomena, he gives voice to them all, explaining the strengths and weaknesses of each.

From time to time Greenstein wanders off into literary digressions that are less successful than his more straightforward prose. But these minor quibbles do not detract from the power of this book and its paean to thought. □

